# BOYS' BOOK of SEA FIGHTS

George Lutz, 1943

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# BOYS' BOOK OF SEA FIGHTS

*Famous Naval Engagements*
*From Drake to Beatty*

BY
CHELSEA CURTIS FRASER
AUTHOR OF
"BOYS' BOOK OF BATTLES," ETC.

*With Maps by the Author*

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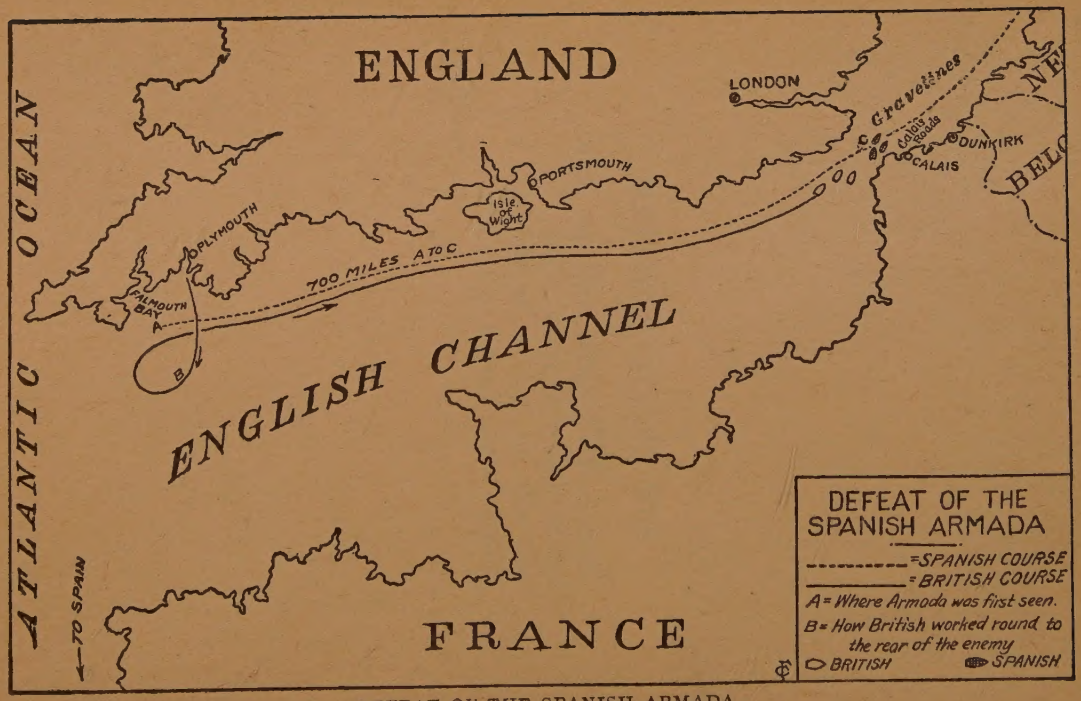
# I

## SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

Great golden galleons plied the Main;
He hit them hard, again, again;
And with his fleet of British ship
Forever broke Spain's tyrant grip.

—*Fiske.*




DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA

# Sir Francis Drake

## EARLY ADVENTURES

THE stirring times into which young Drake was born acted as a forcing-house for the growth of character. Boys turned into men at a leap. Bred in a nursery whose very atmosphere was war and revolution, they were trained by danger and privation to fight battles at an age when the boy of to-day is making ready to take up his school life. The strange mixture of lax moral standards and fierce religious passions, the prevalence of an unwonted bigotry, the light esteem in which human life was held, the rapid succession of startling events, the persecutions carried on in the name of a holy cause,—all went to forge men of singular and violent contrasts.

Sir Francis Drake, the foremost sailor of the Reformation, the chief pirate of Queen Elizabeth, was one of these men. No name in England's annals of the sea has been surrounded with so dazzling a setting of romance as his. During his whole lifetime Drake's adventures found no place in sober history. They invaded the realm of folklore and took strong hold on the popular fancy in the shape of marvelous tales and legends.

Yet there was a solid foundation to them for all of that, and rising out of this wonderland of romance the record of mankind must ever show that this daring boy of Devon was one of the most skillful of navigators as well as the first really great admiral in the development of modern naval science, which had its cradle in England, and which substituted the sailing-navy for the ancient rowing-navy.

Born in 1544, in the heat of the strife between Catholics and Protestants, little Francis held a fierce hatred for Spain and her subjects. His father, Edmund Drake, was one of the most zealous of Protestants, with a gift for preaching which he often used. He made no effort to hide his religious attitude, although Devon was known to be mainly Catholic, but went about boldly and fearlessly asserting his views.

This action could have but one outcome. The Catholic faction made it so hot for all Protestants in Devon, and for Edmund Drake in particular, that he fled with little Francis to St. Nicholas Island, in the harbor of Plymouth. In Chatham reach, beyond the dockyard, at the mouth of the Medway, was the anchorage of vessels out of commission, of war-ships, and of old and useless hulks. Here the Protestant preacher was given an appointment under King Edward as "Reader of Prayers to the Royal Navy,"

and was assigned a rotting hulk as a dwelling-place.

But to young Francis it was no rotting hulk —rather a palace of the most intoxicating delights. Seldom did he care to go ashore. All day long he climbed the masts of his new floating home, raced across the old weather-beaten decks, or delved into the below-decks mysteries of the veteran craft. And when night would come he often fell asleep in the midst of his beloved old war-ship's guns, rocked by the heaving waves and solaced into the last deep oblivion by the lisping tide and the lullaby of the sailors' songs.

Edmund Drake had hoped to place his boy in the navy, with the patronage of Edward VI and the powerful Earl of Bedford, but his expectation was shattered by a rude change. King Edward died. "Bloody Mary," the Catholic Queen, succeeded to the throne, and the land was threatened with a prince of Spain as husband to the Queen.

Then it was that the gathering storm of the Reformation suddenly burst and threw all England into a turmoil. Francis's father lost his position, and was forced to apprentice his son as ship's-boy on a craft that carried on a coasting trade with France and Holland. It was on this channel coaster that the sailor lad, exposed to

great privations and severe conditions, gained some of the most valuable lessons of his experience.

While his young body was being steeled to every conceivable form of hardship, his spirit was being trained for future revenges on the Spanish Main. Passionate tales of the horrors of the Inquisition were being told by Flemish refugees on quay and shipboard. The persecutions of Philip, King of Spain, in the Netherlands, fanned the flame of the English Reformation, and Francis Drake found himself, presently, in the center of the hottest frenzy of religious feeling. Small wonder that he grew to man's estate with that implacable hatred of the very name of Spain which furnished the motive power of his subsequent brilliant career.

In the meantime events followed one another rapidly. Bloody Mary had passed away, Elizabeth reigned, and the Protestants were once more in favor. Francis had grown from boy to youth; his master skipper had died and bequeathed him his little craft on which to begin life as an independent trader.

Open war with Spain had not yet been declared; but the rupture was imminent. Cruel reprisals by private individuals on both sides were rapidly paving the way for the coming

break. The Channel swarmed with sea-rovers. Four hundred adventurers swept the narrow stretches of water in search of plunder. The enormous wealth of the Spanish trade courted depredation in those loose-moraled times when it was not the fashion to be as strictly honest with the belongings of one's neighbor as it is to-day. Spanish galleons were chased and scuttled. Catholic vessels of other nations, particularly France, were considered legitimate prey for looting. Rich cargoes of saffron, cochineal, wool, silk, gold, silver, pearls and precious stones, linen, tapestry and wines, were carried off to the pirates' lairs on the Isle of Wight and in the creeks and inlets of the Irish coast. In revenge, British ships were seized in Spanish ports, and many English sailors were thrown into the dungeons of the infamous Inquisition.

Forced to quit his independent trading on account of its unprofitableness, young Drake entered the only service that then seemed open to him—that of his famous kinsmen, Captains John and William Hawkins, the rich ship-owners and pirate merchants of Plymouth. The chief seaport town of picturesque Devon might well have been called one of the pirate centers of the English coast. Its harbor was large and safe, and many precious cargoes, obtained by foul means

as well as fair, were brought in by daring adventurers who had scoured the limited sea in search of riches. Neither gold nor excitement were hard to find in those days, and Plymouth became, by reason of its peculiar accessibility and additional virtues, a favorite port for the bold crews.

In October, 1567, Drake set sail from Plymouth harbor as pilot to John Hawkins. In the squadron were six vessels, all armed and victualled for a long voyage. This expedition was destined to turn the scale of commercial supremacy and complete the antagonism existing between England and Spain.

In Queen Elizabeth's time neither the navy nor the maritime commerce of England were established on a regular footing. The navy, used simply as an adjunct to the army, had remained an undeveloped independent instrument of national power, and the vastness of its resources were still undreamed of. Later on, Drake proved the wonderful possibilities of a strongly equipped fleet in war time, by turning the enemy's coastline into the center of hostilities and by destroying his trade with foreign countries.

But meanwhile the fleets of war and commerce were intermingled. In time of peace Queen Elizabeth used her men-of-war for merchantmen, while in war time she added her real mer-

chantmen to her force of fighting craft. In this way it became exceedingly difficult to draw the line between official naval expeditions and private commercial enterprises, the last-named of which, as already shown, were frequently synonymous with buccaneering. This state of affairs worked to the disadvantage of her adversaries and much to the advantage of the Queen at times. On other occasions the benefits were reversed. Altogether it proved an ill arrangement.

Often the Queen was one of the shareholders in the filibustering expeditions of Hawkins and Drake, and contributed some ships of war to the outfit. She was too much allured by the prospect of untold riches in gold, silver, pearls and precious stones to resist the temptation of enriching her private coffers by becoming a secret partner in the buccaneering ventures of her favorite pirates.

However, when Spanish ambassadors and the diplomats of other victimized powers called peremptorily for satisfaction, she was careful to assume indignation and disapproval of the practices of her unruly subjects. And while she always welcomed the precious cargoes brought back to her by her partners in adventure, the men themselves were not always sure of her approval. Such was her vacillating trend of mind that one time she might bestow upon the returned hero

the honors of knighthood, and the next time send the poor fellow to the gallows.

But the game was worth the candle, and so it was that on that October day in 1567 Hawkins and Drake sailed out of Plymouth harbor with what amounted to a naval squadron, loaded with ammunition and numerous heavy guns. Accompanying them were two ships-of-war, the *Minion* and the *Jesus,* especially loaned by Elizabeth herself.

From the very first the squadron met with bad weather. Near Cape Finisterre a violent storm damaged and scattered many of the vessels, but they succeeded in reaching their first rendezvous at the Canary Islands. From there they sailed southward to the coast of Guinea, in western Africa, where the traders spent several months in collecting negroes as slaves.

Partly by means of the sword, and partly by exchange of scarlet coats and beads, they succeeded in storing away in their holds as many as five hundred of the black men. Thus equipped with trading material, they crossed over to the Caribbean Sea, reaching the West Indies in the following March.

As traffic had been forbidden in the colonies by the Spanish government, they found it no easy matter to dispose of their cargo. Rio de la Hacha brought them up with a start by presump-

tuously firing upon the merchant fleet. To this rude greeting Hawkins and Drake retaliated with equal severity. They blockaded the port, stormed the defenses and carried the town by impetuous assault. Then, in secret and under cover of the night, the unlawful trade began, and two hundred slaves were exchanged for gold, silver and pearls, sugar and hides.

The leaders were so well pleased with their valuable cargo that they decided to sail at once for home. Unfortunately, however, they had tarried a bit too long in those treacherous waters. Two fierce *furicanos,* or hurricanes, disabled the squadron and compelled them to seek shelter in San Juan de Ulua, or Vera Cruz, the port of the City of Mexico.

In the harbor the adventurers found a Spanish merchant fleet of twelve vessels. These ships were unarmed, and laden with the year's produce of the West Indies, amounting to more than ten million dollars in gold and silver. The Spaniards lay in the harbor, hourly expecting an armed escort of their countrymen to convoy them on the home-bound voyage.

Indeed, the very next morning following the arrival of Hawkins and Drake, the armed escort appeared upon the scene, coming grandly forward just outside the harbor.

It was an extremely difficult position in which

the English traders now found themselves, as may be presumed. Hawkins was obliged to choose between two doubtful courses. Either he must appeal to Spanish honor (a very unstable virtue) to let him proceed on his way unmolested, or he must do his best to keep the enemy's ships from entering the harbor by sheer force of his own feebler armament until the first tornado should cripple the Spaniards sufficiently to permit of him boarding them, seizing their treasure, and making off for "Merrie England."

In his quandary, Hawkins sought the opinion of Francis Drake. The bold Drake at once advised an attack; but Hawkins demurred. This meant the loss to Spain of more than twenty-two millions of dollars; it would undoubtedly precipitate the long-threatened rupture between that country and England, and while the Queen could be counted on as gladly receiving almost any ordinary treasure, he was much afraid of her displeasure at so stupendous a venture as Drake advocated.

Finally Hawkins chose upon a peaceful retirement if possible. He appealed to the Spanish fleet commander for a condition of friendliness. This was graciously promised. But it was all deceit; in spite of their sacred oaths and solemn pledges, no sooner were the wily Spaniards permitted to enter the harbor before they fell upon

the British ships with their superior numbers.

In the sharp but brief engagement that followed the British seamen fought with desperateness and wonderful valor; but being wholly unprepared for the dastardly attack, they could save but few of their vessels. The smaller craft were quickly sunk, and the *Jesus* was so shattered that it had to be abandoned with all its precious spoils. The *Minion,* with Hawkins on board, and the little *Judith,* with Drake, alone escaped on that fatal night. Riddled with Spanish shot and terribly damaged, with crews depleted and half-starved, these two ships struggled homeward and eventually crept into Plymouth harbor without a remnant of the former immense and valuable British cargo.

## PLUNDERING THE SPANISH MAIN

JUST three years later, in 1570, Francis Drake succeeded in obtaining a sailing commission from Queen Elizabeth, as a reward for his sea exploits. During the next two years, he cruised, his own commander, in the West Indies, enriching himself with much plunder.

On Whitsunday Eve, in 1572, Drake set sail for Plymouth at the head of a tiny squadron and a handful of men. Leading was the *Pascha,* Drake's flagship, a vessel of seventy tons. The

rear was brought up by the *Swan,* of twenty-five tons burden, captained by his brother, John Drake, who had also taken up a sea-faring life. These toy men-of-war were fitted out with every warlike device of that time. In addition to a plentiful supply of guns and ammunition, boarding implements and cutlasses, there were three small pinnaces, made to be taken apart and set up again at short notice. The two crews comprised seventy-three men, of whom only one was over thirty years of age. It seemed, truly, like a boy's crazy venture.

Favored by the winds, the squadron sailed without a stop until it had its first sight of Gaudeloupe, one of the leeward Islands in the West Indian group. On reaching Port Pleasant, a small landlocked harbor in the Gulf of Darien, on the mainland, Drake dropped anchor and started to set up his pinnaces. It was a safe bay, and convenient for his purpose.

While he was in the midst of this work, a strange squadron hove in sight. To his great relief this proved to consist of a vessel belonging to Ned Horsey, the well-known pirate of the Isle of Wight, and a Spanish caravel and a shallop that its commander, Captain Ranse, had captured. The two adventurers greeted one another joyfully, and decided to join forces forthwith.

Seven days later these united squadrons crept out of the harbor. Westward along the coast they stole, keeping a sharp lookout for Nombre de Dios, the treasure-house of the Spanish Main. A week later the comparatively small force lay at midnight under the huge bluffs at the point of the harbor of this town. Breathlessly the British lads awaited the breaking of dawn—the time appointed for the audacious attack. Twenty-four of them were armed with muskets. The remainder were possessed of pikes and bows and arrows, with the exception of four who had been provided with drums and trumpets to inspire the crews and terrorize the natives.

Twelve men were left to hold the pinnaces, so as to insure a safe retreat in case of necessity. The rest of the company were divided into two groups, and advanced upon the Plaza from different sides. Half a dozen fire-pikes, swabbed in blazing tow, lighted the way, casting a lurid glow over the narrow streets; the drums and trumpets sounded with maddening din, appearing to be the portion of a large marine band rather than of a few energetic men.

Quickly the Spanish town aroused itself. The great bells in the Catholic church and monastery began to clang out their brazen alarm. People, half-robed, appeared upon the streets and ran hither and thither, with cries and shouts that

merged from fright into a threatening roar. The Spanish soldiers had been called to arms in an incredibly short time; at the end of the Plaza, near the Panama gate, they were soon drawn up to receive the attack.

As they came undaunted forward, a heavy volley of bullets and arrows greeted Drake and his force full in the face. Pausing only long enough to return the fire in like manner, they rushed on, shoulder to shoulder, and closed in upon the consternated Spanish soldiers with pike and cutlass. Flashing the sputtering, wierdly-flickering fire-pikes in their very faces, yelling like a horde of hungry beasts, thrusting to right and left with vicious jabs of sharp-pointed steel, it is not to be wondered at that the superstitious Spaniards went into a panic and presently broke and fled before this enemy they scarcely could see in the darkness and whose weapons seared and lacerated them so terribly.

In a very brief time the last of the enemy soldiery and citizenry had disappeared through the Panama gate, leaving the Plaza in the hands of the adventurers.

Drake at once placed a guard at the entrances to the town. With the rest of his men he took possession of the governor's house. There, in a lower room, a blaze of treasure met their eyes

—a blaze of such proportions that it made the bold commander himself, used to the sight of riches, stare for some moments unbelievingly.

Piled against the wall, and glinting in the beams of light that came through the partly-open door, were great bars of silver. These reached fully seventy feet, from end to end of the long room, and rose, like a huge woodpile, till the upper bars all but scraped the ceiling. The poor Devon lads, with their commander, looked on this unaccustomed sight in half-dazed wonder.

At this moment some of the Englishmen left on guard came running up with the report that the pinnaces were in danger of being captured. Drake immediately dispatched John Oxenheim to reconnoiter the shore, and made a rendezvous at the treasure-house of the King which had not yet been visited and which stood near the water's edge. Here the chief pirate declared they were likely to discover far greater wonders in the shape of gold and precious stones—enough, probably, to overflow their pinnaces should they attempt to take it all.

But scarcely had they departed when one of those furious tropical storms of the region burst suddenly over their heads. The thunder rolled and crashed; the rain fell in torrents. Before they could get under shelter their bowstrings had

been so wetted that they were temporarily useless, and their powder ruined.

This so changed the aspect of matters, that the men, losing their nerve, declined to risk a counter-attack by the Spanish in the proposed visit to the King's treasure-house. Drake pleaded, then taunted.

"I have brought you to the treasure-house of the richest country in the world," he cried; "blame no one but yourselves if you go away empty!"

They stood before the treasure-house as Drake spoke. But still his followers hesitated. Quite losing control of himself, Drake ordered them to break into the structure or suffer the displeasure of the Queen upon their return. He took a step forward himself at this juncture. But, as he did so, he stumbled and fell on his face, blood gushing from a wound in his leg. He had been shot early in the encounter, and had concealed the fact from his men that they might not lose heart.

Quickly they lifted him from the ground, and against all his entreaties carried him to his boat. In order to preserve their beloved captain's life, they set sail, abandoning the rich spoils they had come so far to seek.

But the gold and silver bars left back there in Nombre de Dios were not forgotten, nor given

up for good. Back in a hidden bay in the Gulf of Darien, his favorite secret retreat, Francis Drake soon recovered from his wound, and made plans for stranger and more daring projects than he had yet brewed. With the aid of the Maroons, a savage tribe of escaped negro slaves, he planned to intercept the gold of Panama as it was carried in mule packs across the Isthmus to be shipped to Spain. But months must elapse before the coming of the dry season when the Spaniards were accustomed to make this annual journey overland, and meanwhile his pinnaces stole from the harbor and plundered passing ships and raided the neighboring coast.

Under these circumstances it was not long before the name of *Le Draque* became a dreaded one to the ear of the average Spanish seaman. Castilian captains feared to operate their ships over the Main when it was rumored the famous English navigator was in their waters. Castilian crews trembled, half the fight out of them, when this terrible crusader of the seas suddenly hove in view with his ships. Coast towns, especially Nombre de Dios, put additional guards over their treasure-houses, to all of which strenuous effort at protection Francis Drake only smiled grimly, and continued his successful operations.

On the morning of the 1st of April, a mule train, laden with gold and silver, was traveling

cautiously along the road to Santa Cruz. A mile from the town, within earshot of the carpenters working at the docks, the brush held a menace, but the Spaniards came on blissfully unconscious of the fact, the mule bells tinkling regularly and peacefully as they had been right along.

Suddenly the plodding sound of the many hoofs of the animals was broken by a frightful din. Figures had unexpectedly risen beside the path in two different places, seizing the foremost and hindmost mules, which immediately had set up a terrific braying, spreading terror to those between and occupying the attention of most of the guards to keep them in restraint. In the midst of all this a third body of strange men rose up and discharged a heavy fusillade of bullets and arrows into the ranks of the Spaniards. There was a feeble reply in defense, whereupon the escort fled in a panic, leaving the mules and their precious burdens in the hands of the attackers.

Needless to say, these were the lads from Devon. Swiftly the bars of silver, too heavy to carry away then, were hidden in the burrows of land-crabs or buried in pits especially scooped out for them. The gold itself was stowed away in shirts and pockets, and with forced marches the young Englishmen returned to Rio Francisco.

But, to their dismay, their pinnaces were nowhere to be seen! Instead, seven Spanish ships rode menacingly in the harbor. All hope of safety for the moment was gone. However, Drake's ingenuity found a way out of the awkward dilemma.

A raft was built from drifted tree trunks and limbs. With a biscuit-sack for a sail, and a long sapling for a rudder, Drake and three of his men started on a wild sail over an angry sea. A strong wind lashed the waves high, many of which, as they sat for six hours in water up to their waists, broke completely over their heads. By mid-afternoon the wind died down, and with it the tumultuous waters. Then the hot sun came out and beat hotly down upon their unprotected bodies until their wet clothes fairly steamed and their strength was well-nigh exhausted.

Fortunately, as night settled down they managed to work their way into a quiet little cove, where, as hoped, the pinnaces were found to have sought shelter with their guard-crews. That same night, tired as he was, Drake showed his indomitable will-power and endurance by rowing back to Rio Francisco. The remainder of the crew were told of the happy finding of the pinnaces, whereupon it was decided to return at once to Santa Cruz and succor the hidden silver bars. This was accomplished without further misad-

venture, and the little company then rejoined those aboard the pinnaces.

A fortnight later the lads from Devon started on their homeward journey. They were laden with an unusually rich booty, for, besides the treasure of the mule-train, they had been lucky enough to overhaul almost two hundred vessels in the Caribbean Sea.

The voyage back to England was accomplished in due course, after a number of additional captures of Spanish ships which added in no mean way to their already enormous amount of treasure. It was on the Sabbath Day, August 9th, 1573, that they cast anchor at last in Plymouth harbor. News of Drake's arrival and wonderful exploits spread like wildfire. So anxious were the townspeople, then in attendance at divine worship, to see his ships and pay homage to their successful countryman, that many of them forsook their devotions to hurry down to the quay.

## THE RICHES OF THE NEW OCEAN

On a certain day in November, 1577, we find Drake standing on the deck of his ship, his face turned toward the fabled Pacific. Men of the time tell us that he was dressed in a "loose,

dark seaman's shirt, belted at the waist, with a scarlet cap adorning his flowing black locks." If this be true, as undoubtedly it is, he must have looked the typical bold rover of the seas that he was indeed.

Drake's ships were mere cockle-shells compared to vessels of modern times, being no larger than the average coaster. They consisted of the *Pelican,* one hundred tons; the *Elizabeth,* eighty tons; the *Swan,* fifty tons; and the *Christopher,* a pinnace of fifteen tons. The first two ships carried sixteen guns, while the *Swan* was a provision-boat. One hundred and fifteen men and fourteen boys manned the craft which were well ammunitioned with bullets, wildfire, chainshot, muskets, pistols, pikes, cutlasses, and bows and arrows.

Into a chartless and unknown ocean, to brave a shadowy world of water which popular superstition had peopled with every conceivable terror of the elements and every dreadful form of animal, serpent, and fish life, Drake was about to sail with this little squadron. To his crew his final destination was kept a secret. Led to believe that they were bound for Alexandria, not until they reached the coast of Morocco was the real object of the venture made known.

Beset almost at the start with bad weather—through stress of gales, fogs, calms and tem-

pestuous seas—embroiled in an incipient mutiny, treason, and the tragedy of an ocean lynch-court, which was followed by an execution off the lonely coast of Patagonia, the sorely-assailed fleet nevertheless kept courageously on its perilous course. A spirit less unflinching than Drake's would have quailed under the torment of Nature and inconstance of man. Only three of the five ships were brought finally to the gateway of the great South Sea. Meantime the *Pelican* had been rechristened the *Golden Hind,* and on the 6th of September she was the first of her sister craft to pass through the Straits of Magellan, amid cold and sickness, and enter the famed South Sea.

Really the dangers of the voyage had now just begun. No sooner had the expedition entered the confines of the mighty Pacific than all the furies of a violent tempest burst over them. For six weeks they were tossed to and fro like chips. Battered of hulk by the gigantic waves, torn of rigging and sail by the terrific winds, they were swept fully six hundred miles out of their course. During the third week the *Marigold* went down with all on board. A week later the *Elizabeth* became separated from the *Golden Hind,* and losing heart its commander, Captain Wynter, returned through the Straits the way they had

come, and sailed back with his sadly crippled vessel to England, there to report that in all probability his ship was the only survivor of the squadron, and to recount the awesome fury of the strange new waters which were "invested with all the wrath of Satan."

Meantime Drake was left alone, but unsubdued. And the storm, as if exhausted in its battle with this man of iron will, or desirous of rewarding him for his heroic struggle, abated. Once more the angry skies cleared away, the sun smiled brightly, and fair winds played among the rent sails, while the lashing waters melted into the long, regular, smooth-rolling swells which were more suited to the name later bestowed upon this fabled body of liquid.

Soon Drake found himself in the midst of the islands of Tierra del Fuego, and then, on a late day in October, he knew that he was really one of the great discoverers of the world. He stood triumphantly on the southernmost point of land of the western hemisphere. At his feet, where the dream of ages had woven a mystic shroud of romantic separation between them, the immense waters of the known Atlantic and the unknown Pacific rolled together in one mighty confluence of twin-love.

As he went Spanish ships were encountered,

and prize after prize fell into his hands. In Valparaiso harbor the *Golden Hind* met a galleon heavily laden with Spanish plate to the amount of thirty-seven thousand ducats. Never before had a strange sail been seen in those waters, and the crew of this vessel — the *Grand Captain of the South*—thought the new arrival must be a friend. They brought out bottles of Chile wine to drink to the health of the Englishmen, but drank too deeply. Tumbled into the hatches of their own ship by their guests, these Spaniards did not succeed in extricating themselves until all their treasure had been carried away.

This was typical of many such adventures in the days that followed. To Drake and his men the new ocean was anything but Pacific!

Then one fine day Drake pointed the bow of the *Golden Hind* straight across the Pacific. Past the Carolines, the Philippines, and the Moluccas, he made his way. Creeping among the maze of dangerous shoals and coral reefs in the Sea of Celebes, the vessel ran unexpectedly upon a sunken rock.

For twenty hours she lay at the mercy of the waves, caught fast, resisting all effort of her crew to release her. Finally, as a last resort, eight guns and three tons of cloves were thrown overboard in an effort to lighten her sufficiently

to float off. Fortunately, the wind freshened just then, and with her sails set to catch every ounce of pressure, she slid from the reef into deep water. The men uttered a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving.

This was the last and greatest danger. Soon the *Golden Hind* cleared the Archipelago, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and just two years and ten months from the day she sailed out of Plymouth harbor she again swept into it. The long-lost had returned.

In the meanwhile England had given up ever seeing Drake and his crew again. If he had not actually fallen a victim to the fury of the big new waters, it had by this time become a foregone conclusion that he had either perished at the hands of some mysterious wild tribe along the coastline or in the islands, or been taken and executed by the Spaniards. Therefore, his return, laden down with spoils of vast richness, created a thunderbolt of surprise among his countrymen.

Indeed, Drake had arrived to find that the Queen had publicly disowned him—doubtless for political effect more than anything else. Even at the time the Spanish ambassador was calling loudly for redress for the recent depredations that he had committed.

Getting wind of this unpromising condition of

affairs, Drake considered it prudent to drop anchor behind St. Nicholas Island, where his father had fled with him from religious persecution thirty years before. Thence he dispatched a messenger to the Queen, with notification of his arrival, and was presently asked to appear before her august person. When he obeyed the summons it was not without full hands. Drake knew Elizabeth's fondness for money and jewels, and the richest of his spoils went with him as a gift to her and her courtiers.

The Queen, true to Drake's expectations, greeted him warmly. Pleased by the great value of these presents, and filled with admiration for her subject's daring exploits, Her Majesty loaded him with honors. Already the hero of the hour with the countryside, his name was now, with the Queen's own commendations, on every one's tongue. Throughout the breadth of England he was praised. From the Lizard to the Downs his deeds were recounted before humble and pretentious firesides alike.

The booty was carried to the Tower of London, but before registration, four hundred thousand dollars were extracted from the pile as Drake's own share of the spoils. Later Elizabeth allowed him an additional fifty thousand reward. The *Golden Hind* was brought up the Thames and there preserved as a memorial. On

her deck a public banquet was given, and the Queen, who graced the occasion, conferred upon Drake the honor of knighthood.

But the great seaman had not come home to be petted and pampered at court. His was a character made up of sterner and bigger things than that. Even now his active and far-reaching mind was burdening itself with thinking out other points for his attack.

However, five years were to pass before Drake could obtain his letters of marque. In the midst of treachery, vacillations and other delays, his spirit fretted to be loosed once more upon the waters. Meanwhile he was forced to work at home in organization of the navy, in voting supplies as a member of Parliament, and in improving the town and harbor of Plymouth, of which town he had been appointed mayor.

It was King Philip of Spain himself who precipitated matters finally. The arrogant sovereign neighbor seized a number of British corn-ships, and Elizabeth's temper was sufficiently inflamed for her to order Drake out to retaliate. His fleet, quickly collected, was the largest he had ever commanded, and the most extensive privateering squadron on record up to that time. It numbered two men-of-war, eighteen cruisers, and many pinnaces and store-ships, manned by two thousand soldiers and sailors.

On a late day in September, 1585, Drake hoisted the English colors over his flagship, the *Elizabeth Bonaventura,* and led his fleet out to sea. Again his goal was the West Indies, but this time he was destined to strike a far more telling blow at enemy interests than upon the other occasion gone before.

In his eagerness to get away, Drake started short of provisions. To replenish his stores, he stopped at the Bayona Islands and here helped himself to sufficient Spanish food to properly victual the entire fleet. Arriving at St. Iago, of the Cape Verde group, he stormed the town and raided the island, then headed for San Domingo, which was reached shortly after Christmas.

San Domingo was a walled and strongly fortified city, the largest and most important in the West Indies. Drake realized that its fall would have a powerful moral effect upon the whole of Europe, and straightway made up his mind to attack it, even though this step would entail a serious naval operation for him.

He planned the assault with great care, surprised the garrison, and after a few hours' brisk fighting the Spaniards fled across the river, leaving the storming party in possession of the Plaza. Observing that his force was too weak to successfully defend the place for any time, the circumnavigator demanded a ransom of a quarter-

million dollars. After destroying the enemy shipping in the harbor, he then stood away upon the Spanish Main.

Cartagena, capital of the Main, and one of the wealthiest of the many wealthy Spanish cities, was sighted in February. Formidable defenses surrounded it on all sides. From the sea it was protected by a lagoon to which only two narrow entrances, both well guarded, gave access. From the land, approach was made difficult by a creek, also amply fortified.

To storm the city seemed sheer madness, even for a force the size of Drake's. But Drake, as usual, was resourceful enough to uncover a promising method of accomplishing his ends.

A detachment was ordered to wade through the surf and to come unexpectedly upon the city from a point where the enemy had made no provision for defense. At the same time a boat attack was feigned on the side of the harbor, in order to deceive the Spaniards.

The stratagem was successful. The city was taken with a rush; the defenders ran. Disdaining to loot the place of its rich treasure, Drake merely demanded a ransom of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which was gladly paid. Having also destroyed the shipping here, the commander then turned his eyes toward Panama.

But on the way thither, sickness broke out among his men. Many died, and others were stricken down every day. With his diminished force he saw that he could scarcely hope for success at so strongly a fortified place. So in the latter days of March he set sail for home, quite satisfied that the blows he had struck would do much to deter Spain in her threatened attack upon England.

## THE DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA

PHILIP OF SPAIN, aided and abetted by the Catholic policy of the Pope and the court of France, had been making vast preparations to produce and equip the most powerful fleet that the world had yet seen. In all the ports of Sicily, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal, vessels of enormous size were being built for him, the heaviest of guns were placed upon them, and vast quantities of provisions and small arms collected.

Of course England was kept in ignorance of Philip's animose intentions, rumors having been sedulously spread that the great Armada was designed to proceed to the Indies to realize extensive projects of distant conquest. But she was not wholly deceived; the fact is, some of Eliza-

beth's advisors, prominent among whom were Sir Francis Drake, had whispered in her ear what to look out for, and it was largely owing to her acquiescence in the suspicion that her own country might be the object of all this enemy energy that she had consented to the last departure of Drake for the West Indies. Really it had been a most opportune blow that the famous sea-king had dealt the Spaniards upon this occasion. But for the delay it caused in Philip's plans, the huge Armada would have been cast upon England much sooner than it came, and perhaps at a time when it could not have been successfully met.

On the afternoon of July 19th, 1588, a group of English captains were collected at the Bowling Green on the Hoe at Plymouth. Never before or since have men of such fame gathered at that favorite mustering-place for British seamen. There was Sir Francis Drake, first English circumnavigator of the globe, the terror of every Spanish coast in the Old World and the New; there was Sir John Hawkins, the rough veteran of many a daring voyage on the African and American seas, and of many a desperate battle; there was Sir Martin Frobisher, earliest of explorers of the Arctic seas in search of the elusive Northwest Passage; there was Lord Howard of Effingham, High-Admiral of England, in his

patriotic zeal bold even to disobey the Queen when obedience meant harm to the welfare of his country; and last, but in no wise least, you could also observe Sir Walter Raleigh, who had been commissioned to raise and equip the land forces of Cornwall, and who had come to consult with the Lord-Admiral and other high officers.

Many other brave and skillful mariners, though of less renown, were there also. All were enjoying a game of bowls on the green with true sailor-like merriment during their temporary relaxation from duty. Presently Drake chanced to look off over the harbor. He noticed a small armed vessel running before the wind, all sails filled, making in furiously.

"What is this?" cried Drake, directing the attention of his nearest companions to the approaching vessel. "Truth, and I believe 'tis none less I see than Fleming and his privateer coming yonder. A penny to know what could induce such mad speed from the lazy Scotchman!"

They were soon to know, without the penny. A few minutes later the lanky Fleming stood in the midst of the excited group, telling the English officers that he had that very morning seen the great Spanish Armada off the Cornish coast!

Meanwhile messengers and signals had been

dispatched fast and far throughout England, to warn each town and village that the enemy had come at last. In every seaport there was instant making ready by land and by sea; in every shire and every city there was instant mustering of horse and man. But England's best defense then, as ever, was her fleet. In spite of the fact that Elizabeth had done much to embarrass the efficiency of this by her penuriousness in dispensing ammunition, doling out powder and ball day by day, at the last moment of need, Drake had exercised his men well at target-practice, though even this she had regarded an extravagant waste.

It was a solemn sight when the two fleets had their first meeting. The English ships, some of which had been loaned by the Dutch, totaled one hundred and fifty-two, manned by seventeen thousand men. The great majority of these were merchantmen, only thirty-six belonging to the Royal Navy. Practically all were light, swift, and easily managed.

The Spanish Armada itself was a gorgeous display, more fitted for a pageant than a war. The great fleet consisted of one hundred and fifty ships, mostly much larger than those of their adversary. Of these there were galleons, galliasses, galleys, caravels, petaches and zabraes, on which Spain admits, in a document of the

time: "The number of mariners were about eight thousands; of slaves, twenty hundred and eighty-eight; of soldiers, twenty thousands (besides noblemen and gentlemen voluntaries) . . ." It adds that "the aforesaid ships were of an huge and incredible capacitie and receipt: for the whole fleet was large enough to contain the burthen of sixty thousands tunnes."

Interesting, too, is the following description in the quaint English of the period:

"The galeons were sixty-four in number, being of an huge bignesse, and very flatly built, being of marvelous force also, and so high that they resembled great castles, most fit to defend themselves and to withstand an assault, but in giving encounter farr inferiour are they unto the English and Dutch ships, which can with great dexterite weild and turne themselves at all assayes. The upperworke of the said galeons was of thicknesse and strength sufficient to bear off musket-shot. The lower worke and the timbers thereof were out of measure strong, being framed of plankes and rigs foure or five foote in thicknesse, insomuch that no bullets might go through them, but afterward were found to sticke fast within the massie substance of those thicke plankes. Great and well-pitched cables were twined about the masts of their shippes, to strengthen them against the battery of shot."

This great Armada was drawn up before the British in the form of a gigantic crescent whose horns, or tips, were fully seven miles apart. There was a southwest wind, and before it the huge vessels comprising the enemy fleet came sailing grandly on.

Very neatly and skillfully the English craft, keeping out of sight and range, side-stepped and slipped around to the rear of the approaching enemy. Coming up swiftly from behind, they opened the attack.

Caught at a disadvantage at the outset, her soldiers far better fighters on land than on sea, Spain's huge fleet was dealt a stunning and staggering blow by the agile enemy whose guns were all manned by veteran seamen used to hitting their targets whether inanimate or animate. After standing to for a brief period in an effort to stem the furious tide of shot which tore through their rigging, swept their decks and rained against their hulls, the Spaniards sailed away.

A running fight now took place in which some of the best ships of the Spaniards were captured, and many more were severely damaged. For days the battle continued, always with the enemy on the go. The swift craft of the English sailed in and out and round and round among the unwieldy galliasses, cannonading them, and then

escaping nimbly out of range, suffering little themselves. Time after time they repeated these performances, teasing and harassing the clumsy Spanish boats and pelting their enormous turrets, which looked like castellated fortresses. Undoubtedly had their crews been more equal, and the adversary not outnumbered in this respect more than two to one, the British lads would have closed with the Armada and fought matters out hand-to-hand. As it was, Lord Howard and Sir Francis Drake were wise to bide their time, and to first insure success by gradually weakening the adversary at long range.

Slowly holding their course along the coast the two fleets, still fighting fitfully and bitterly, continued hostilities. Each day added not only to the spirit, but to the number of the British force. Raleigh, Oxford, Cumberland and Sheffield joined them.

The Spanish admiral also showed great judgement, and no mean skill, in his maneuvers with the awkward vessels under his command. Had he been any less of the clever navigator, he never could have brought himself and fleet through as well as he did. And on the 27th of July he brought his Armada, sorely distressed but comparatively unbroken, to anchor in Calais Roads. Here, according to pre-arrangement, he expected to be joined by his countryman, the

Prince of Parma, who was to come by water from Dunkirk with a flotilla and a large army with the purpose of invading England. But Parma had been nicely held in the meantime by the Dutch and English blockaders, and so was still far away when the Spanish Armada entered Calais Roads.

The great Armada lay in the offing, with its largest craft ranged outside, "like strong castles, fearing no assault; the lesser placed in the middleward." Lord Howard could not attack them in this position without great disadvantage. However, on the second night, past midnight, as the clouds covered the moon and no eye could pierce the darkness, eight vessels crept noiselessly within the Spanish lines.

A moment later the sea was suddenly illumined, and eight seeming volcanoes, spitting sparks and shooting long tongues of flame, bore down upon the terrified enemy. These were the dreaded fire-ships—such as the Greeks had so often used against the Turkish fleets in their war of independence—and had been unloosed by the forces of Howard and Drake.

As those eight masses of flame came nearer, a dreadful panic seized the Spaniards. The terror spread from ship to ship with seeming simultaneous quickness. Amid yells of fright and the greatest of confusion, the Spanish crews cut their cables to avoid the oncoming conflagrations and

took to the wildest flight. One of the larger of the galliasses ran afoul of another, and both were so hopelessly tangled in a moment that they fell easy victims to their adversaries.

When daylight broke it was seen that the rest of the Armada was scattered along the Flemish coast. With great difficulty they obeyed their admiral's order to range themselves round him near Gravelines.

Now was the golden opportunity for the English to assail the crippled Spaniards once more. Drake and Fenner were the first British commanders to reach the unwieldy leviathans and open the assault. Then came Fenton, Southwell, Burton, Cross, Raynor, followed by the Lord-Admiral himself and Lord Sheffield. Huddling as close together as possible for mutual protection, the Spanish ships, firing desperately, broke and ran for it. After them, almost every shot telling on craft or crew, came their relentless will-o'-the-wisp opponents.

The towering ships of the compact Armada made capital targets for the British gunners—targets hard to miss within fair range. Riddled, shattered, disabled, their own shots going wild or falling short, the best of the Spanish vessels soon gave up using their cannon, and drifted helplessly with the current toward the coast of Holland,—past Dunkirk,—and far away

from the Prince of Parma who, in watching their defeat from the coast, must have, as Drake afterward expressed it, "chafed like a bear robbed of her whelps."

And the remnant of Spain's colossal Armada —the sad, bedraggled little remnant left—made their way painfully through storm and hunger and sickness, to the shores of their mother country, still chased by the hound-ships of the British. As the latter pursued, pitiful wreck after pitiful wreck of what was but a short time previous a floating armed palace filled with gayly-dressed and elaborately-fed Spanish noblemen and soldiery, drifted upon the tossing waves. Of this great collection of proud craft only a pathetic handful ever returned to King Philip.

Much of the glory, if not indeed the greater share, of the defeat of the Spanish Armada was due to Drake. Although occupying the secondary command of Vice-Admiral in the Queen's fleet, Drake had been to the forefront throughout the fighting and had been entrusted with executive powers which aided materially in the successful outcome of the battle. While his own vessel had been struck as many as forty times, no ship of consequence under his command had been seriously damaged; likewise only minor casualties had been suffered among the crews, and no officers were injured.

The last act in the tragedy of Drake's life was laid among the scenes of his youth and early triumphs. Drawn irresistibly toward those islands in the Caribbean Sea that had witnessed his first exploits, he led his squadron one day to La Hacha, to Nombre de Dios, and then, in a sudden wave of the adventurous spirit of his boyhood, he headed for Truxillo, the port of Honduras, and for the rich towns of Nicaragua.

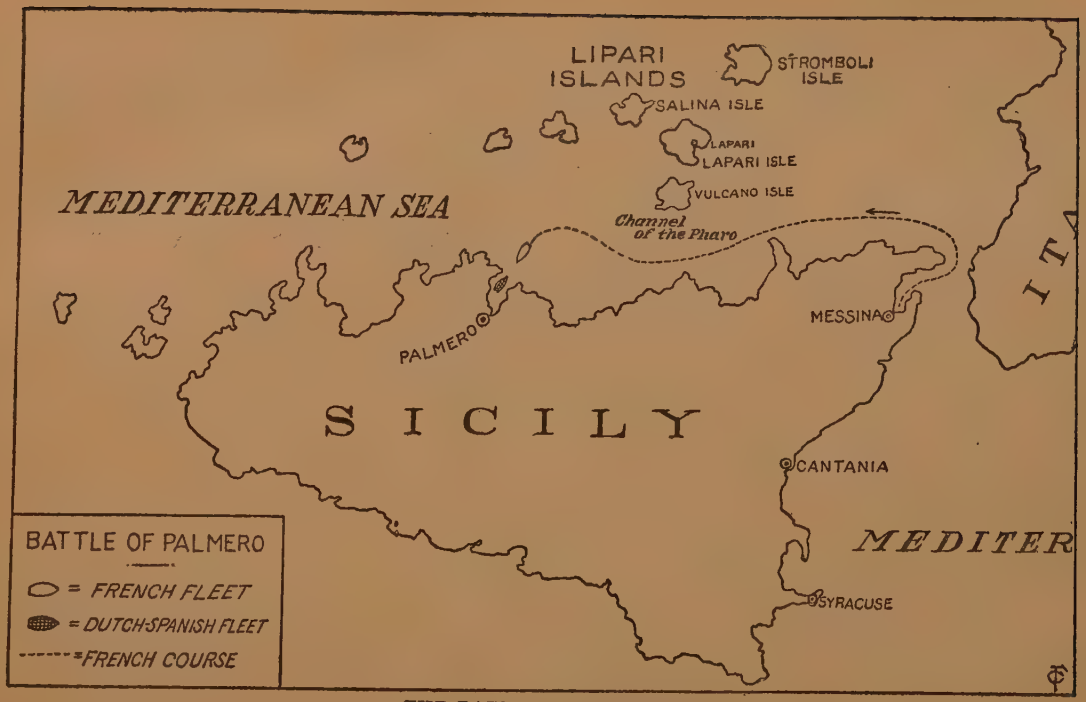
But ill winds snared him; he was held in the fatal Mosquito Gulf, where pestilence lurked in every breath of the foul air. Stricken with fever, his crew sailed with him back toward Puerto Bello. There, on the 28th of January, 1596, the great sea-king expired, and his remains were confined very fittingly to the sepulcher of the deep he had loved so much in life.

## II

## MARSHAL ANNE-HILARION DE TOURVILLE

For by the dewy moonlight still,
He fed the weary-turning mill,
Or bent him in the chill morass
To pluck the long and tangled grass,
And hear above his scar-worn back
The heavy slave-whip's frequent crack!

—*Whittier.*




THE BATTLE OF PALMERO

# Marshal Anne-Hilarion de Tourville

## A KNIGHT OF MALTA

THERE has been a time in the history of the chief maritime nations of Europe when it has fallen to the lot of each to seize and to hold the supreme sovereignty of the waters. Sometimes this mastery was for but a very brief duration; sometimes it was jealously maintained for years. But always was it kept at the cost of the greatest and most heroic effort, and lost because another power exceeded this endeavor.

One of these brilliant but short flashes of triumph came to France during the reign of Louis XIV, at the very outset of her career as a recognized naval power. Of the four illustrious seamen who were largely responsible for France's strength on the deep blue waters, none contributed quite so strongly as Admiral Anne-Hilarion de Tourville.

This valiant seaman was born at the castle of Tourville in Normandy in the year 1642, coming from a long line of noble and distinguished ancestry. His father, the Baron de Tourville, died when he was five years old. Slender and pale,

almost delicate, it was little thought that this frail boy was destined to spend forty-five years of his life in an active and tireless service on the sea, and that he was to be counted the foremost commander of his time.

Tourville's noble birth automatically entitled him to become a member of the famous Order of the Knights of Malta. As a preface to this distinction, at fourteen he became a page to the grand-master of the Order. He served as page three years, was then placed on probation a twelve-month for the higher honor of Knight, and when eighteen years old stepped into the much-coveted position.

This was a proud day for the youth—a day that opened his long career as a seaman. The ensuing seven years of his life were spent on the Mediterranean, far from home, fighting the Moorish buccaneers who swarmed over the narrow seas, and protecting the commerce of France from their ravages. These wild corsairs, the highwaymen of the Mediterranean, whose haunts lay along the creeks and inlets of the North African coast, for more than a hundred and fifty years had been stabbing the commerce of all Christian Europe. They had spread terror along the southern shores of that continent; they had even ravaged the seaport towns of Spain, Italy, and Sicily; they had interrupted trading, held up

rich convoys bound to distant marts, and chained thousands of unlucky Christian slaves to the galley benches of their robber craft. Many of the greatest seamen of recent ages, admirals of Italy, Spain, France, and Holland, had spent the best years of their lives in hunting down and trying to annihilate these leeches of trade. But their natural rivals and untiring enemies, those whose special mission it had become to dispute and weaken their power, were the Knights of Malta, themselves the Christian pirates of the Mediterranean, whose booty was these corsairs from the Barbary steppes.

The brilliant crusades against the Moorish crescent were carried on in a fleet of galleys most splendidly equipped. Every Knight was obliged to serve in four cruises of six months each, and few it was of them who were not sorry when their period of stirring adventure came to an official end. Young Tourville particularly started out upon his voyages with gusto. In his very first encounter with the Barbary pirates he exposed himself heedlessly to the sweeping fire of the enemy, and fought with such abandon of bravery that he won the admiration of friend and foe alike. In this encounter he was finally wounded in three places, but insisted on staying on deck and using his gun.

Following came a long succession of heroic deeds. These brought him a reputation for

ability and intrepid courage that spread from Venice to the royal court of France. The Venetian republic was so grateful for his services in relieving her from the depredations of the Algerian sea-rovers that she bestowed upon him the titles of "Protector of Maritime Commerce" and "Invincible Seaman." As a sequel Louis XIV, his own ruler, sent for him and personally complimented him upon his fine exploits. Shortly afterward he received his commission as captain in the Royal Navy, and was given the command of a ship.

Meanwhile the relations of France to other continental nations became strained. Finally, in 1672, she and Great Britain united with the purpose of crushing the power of the Netherlands, as stated in a preceding section of this volume. In this step France was largely actuated by her feeling of security in the navy which she had recently built up—a navy such as she had never owned before, a navy that was the greatest pride of the King's heart, and one which he was very desirous of trying out, like a boy with a new kite. Envy of the enormous commercial wealth of the Netherlands, with Louis XIV at least, was a secondary consideration.

Great Britain, weary of hostilities, had withdrawn from the contest and had signed a treaty

of peace with the Dutch. France was left to continue the war alone with her doughty antagonist. Determined to destroy the commerce of the Netherlands, she sent her men-of-war to the Mediterranean.

In the battles that followed in southern waters Tourville took an active part under the leadership of Admiral Duquesne. With him were many other gallant young Frenchmen, the pick of all France, but of them all none stood out so brilliantly in action as the dashing, slender figure of Tourville himself, then thirty-four years old.

Allied with Holland, Spain was threatened with the loss of one of her most important possessions in the Mediterranean. This was Messina, a seaport in Sicily, queen island of the South Sea. The people had risen in revolt against the Catholic King, had captured the forts and gained almost entire possession of the city. Too weak, however, to maintain the rebellion without foreign aid, the Messinese asked for the protection of the King of France.

At this stage of affairs Admiral Vivonne was lying at anchor with his fleet off the coast of Catalonia. With him were such renowned seamen of France as Valbelle, Preuilly, and Tourville. He dispatched Valbelle, on September 27th, 1674, with a small squadron to help the insurgents.

This failing to meet the demands of the occasion, in January a second expedition was sent with Tourville as captain.

Several forts had been retaken by the Spaniards in the meantime, among which were the Pharo and Reggio. Outside the gates of Messina was encamped a Spanish army. This force, aided by a fleet of forty-one sail which guarded the entrance to the Straits, pressed the city vigorously. Thus Messina lay, surrounded by land and sea, practically at the mercy of the Spaniards when, on the 2nd of January, Valbelle appeared with his small squadron consisting of six warships, one frigate, three fire-ships, and a convoy of supply vessels.

Favored by fresh winds and an incoming tide, the French flotilla dashed through the channel, swept past the barricade of Spanish galleys, weathered the fire of the forts, and forced an entrance into the Straits with bewildering audacity. Amazed to inaction the heavy men-of-war offered little resistance. Messina was relieved by a brilliant stroke.

But the new supply of provisions could not last forever. At the end of five weeks the stores were exhausted. Starvation faced the rescued. The sorely besieged prayed that succor might reach them before it was too late. That prayer was answered.

In February Tourville's ships sailed into view, and soon followed more French ships in the shape of the squadrons of Duquesne and Vivonne and Valbelle. This great force was more than the Spaniards could withstand. In a short time they were put to flight, leaving half their number behind. Needless to say the victors were received with the wildest joy and greatest gratitude when they entered Messina and brought huge stores of food to the besieged rebels.

During the remainder of the year of 1675 the French strengthened themselves in Sicily, and extended their conquests along the southern coast.

On the 17th of August twenty-nine ships under Vivonne anchored in the bay before Agosta and opened fire on the forts protecting the harbor. While this was going on Tourville was leading six ships to the mouth of the harbor. Despite the galling fire to which he was soon subjected he forced an entrance and turned his broadsides upon Fort Avalo, the strongest and most important of the enemy defenses.

As the fort still held out after a brisk cannonading, Tourville sent Cöetlogon with a small landing party to make an attack at closer quarters. Under a storm of shot and stones the first barricade was then taken, but Cöetlogon's little force was threatened with capture by his numer-

ous foe. Alarmed for the safety of his friend, Tourville threw himself into a small boat with a few volunteers and flew to the succor.

The Spaniards made a feint by running up a white flag. When the rescuers had come within range they let loose a wild storm of artillery in their direction. But Tourville was not to be nonplussed. After an hour's obstinate attack, the second barricade was carried, the fort surrendered, and the first landing party was saved. The town quickly thereafter capitulated.

In reporting this success Tourville, as customary, gave the lion's share of the credit to his officers and men. But his government, while up to this time slow to promote him, was not blind to the truth, and a year later the modest and intrepid captain was rewarded with a commission as commodore.

## PUNISHING THE BARBARY PIRATES

IMAGINE yourself gazing down upon the volcanic Islands of Lipari—the very outposts of Sicily—the rock-sentinels that guard the entrance to the Gulf of Joy and act as finger-posts for many a grizzled mariner as he feels his way along

the shores of Italy past her beautiful Queen Island.

On Stromboli, which forms the gateway to the gulf, stands the great lighthouse of the southern sea. Rising more than two thousand feet above the blue waters into which it has so often spat its molten saliva, Mount Etna in solitary grandeur furnishes by night the ever-burning beacon to seamen which is denied to Lipari. At the foot of this centuries-old volcano, under the open maw of fiercely-boiling flame, turbulent gases, and gurgling lava, the greatest seafighters of the age have now gathered to measure their skill and prowess.

Sent by William of Orange to the Mediterranean to make a juncture with the Spanish fleet and force the rebel Sicilian town to return to the allegiance of the King of Spain, the famous De Ruyter faces the French fleet with eighteen Dutch men-of-war. Duquesne's force numbers twenty-five war-ships and six fire-ships. He has divided his flotilla into three squadrons, one of which is commanded by Tourville.

For twenty-four hours the rival fleets lay watching each other warily, maneuvering to gain advantage of the wind. As the first gray light of dawn begins to appear in the east on the morning of the 8th of January, 1676, a stiff breeze

springs up to the advantage of the French. Without hesitation Duquesne orders sail set, and bears down upon his enemy.

The Dutch receive the onslaught with a firm front, retaliating with a heavy fire. From ten in the morning till ten at night both sides fight with vigor, often coming to close quarters. From the deck of his ship, the *Sceptre,* Tourville supports his leader valiantly, never failing to be in the hottest part of the combat. On one occasion he is assailed by a huge three-decker. The latter's heavy guns soon create havoc with his rigging, and his ship, crippled and shot-torn from bow to stern, is only saved by a French fire-ship that comes to his assistance.

Just before nightfall a squadron of nine Spanish galleys pounce down upon the French flagship, and annoy her with their powerful chase-guns, but Tourville sends several thirty-six-pound cannon ball among them, and they scatter precipitately. When darkness comes, the loss to the combatants has been about equal, each suffering considerably.

The next day both fleets receive reënforements. But the battle is not renewed; Duquesne sails around Sicily and enters Messina harbor from the south; De Ruyter goes first to Naples and afterward to Palmero to revictual and refit.

The most important action, however, was yet to take place.

On April 22d, between Catania and Agosta, the French fleet of thirty men-of-war encountered the combined squadrons of Spain and Holland, numbering three less ships. Bearing down quietly upon one another, no sign of hostility was apparent until they were within musket-shot range. Then suddenly both fleets let loose violent broadsides.

The conflict was prolonged and furious. Toward the close of the day De Ruyter's flagship succeeded in closing with the *Saint Esprit*, at whose masthead flew the ensign of Duquesne. In a moment the two rival flagships were doing their utmost to sink the other. All their available guns were aimed with the deadliest intent, and men stood ready with boarding tools and weapons for the time when the crucial moment should arrive.

At this juncture Tourville observed his chieftain's predicament. With the *Sceptre* and *Saint Michel* he appeared quickly on the scene, a ship at either side of the Dutch flagship. Neatly trapped, it was by the utmost difficulty and only with a fine example of his famous seamanship that De Ruyter managed to extricate himself without capture. However, he had been sorely wounded himself. Not until later did this knowledge come to the French—not until their brave adversary's fleet had retired to Syracuse and De

Ruyter's body had been consigned to the sea by his sorrowing countrymen.

By ten o'clock that evening the combat ceased. Next morning, in rain and mist, the combatants separated, the French to keep to the seas until May 1st, after which they sailed into the harbor of Messina.

The death of De Ruyter was an irreparable blow to the Allied fleet. Robbed of the strength of its most able commander, it is not to be wondered at that the next sea battle fought by the French proved to be one of the most signal naval triumphs on record.

After restocking and repairing their ships, the Allies had sailed out of Syracuse harbor, doubled the island of Sicily, and entered the port of Palmero, where they intended to await the movements of the French fleet. Their idleness was short-lived.

On May 28th the French fleet of twenty-nine warships, nearly as many galleys, and almost a dozen fire-ships, put to sea from the harbor of Messina. It passed through the channel of the Pharo, and sailed northward on a lookout for the enemy. The Duke of Vivonne, viceroy of Sicily and nominal head of the Mediterranean fleet, was a member of the expedition, having come along in person that he might share what was considered to be the last glorious venture of French

arms. His flag was run up on Tourville's ship, the *Sceptre,* which thus became the chief vessel of the center. Duquesne, as vice-admiral, took command of the vanguard.

Something like four days after leaving Messina, the French fleet sighted Palmero. There, before their eyes, the complete fleet of the Allies rode at anchor, arranged in battle formation. On the right and left wings were the Dutch ships under the command of Admiral Haan, who had succeeded De Ruyter. In the center the Spanish vessels were concentrated under De Ibarra. The craft were three or four cable lengths from the entrance to the roadstead, some of them being sheltered by the mole. In all there were in the combined Dutch-Spanish fleet twenty-seven ships of war, nineteen galleys, and four fire-ships.

No sooner had the French sighted the enemy than Vivonne called four of his most trusted officers for a most difficult and perilous undertaking. Among them was Tourville, the youngest of the commodores. These officers were asked to make a complete examination of the adversary's position, and to draw up a plan of his defenses.

The party set out in a small sailboat in broad daylight. Supported by the squadron of galleys, which were ready to protect them with their guns at the slightest provocation, the valiant and

devoted quartet of young Frenchmen entered the harbor and approached to within close range of the serried battle front. Sailing up and down the enemy's line, Tourville and his companions made careful observations, no detail of the arrangements of defense escaping their vigilant eyes. Struck with admiration at their audacious bravery the Dutch and Spanish looked on silently. Not a gun did they fire.

Vivonne at once called a council of war to decide on a plan of attack. Tourville had already worked out a plan of procedure in his active mind which he now presented to his commander-in-chief. So pleased were the officers with this, especially Vivonne himself, that, after some discussion it was accepted with no little enthusiasm.

A stiff breeze was blowing from the northwest the next morning, the 2d of June. Shortly after daybreak, aided by this breeze, the French fleet sailed, in battle order, through the entrance to the harbor. They were led by nine selected warships and five fire-ships which were to open action by attacking the head of the enemy's line. Every deck was cleared for action, every man was at his post.

But before the French had swung into place, the Dutch opened fire. Their heaviest broadsides were poured into the bold intruders. In return the French sent even more furious and

well-directed charges across the waters at the Dutch. This made their ships quiver and waver. Along the whole line the French fire was fully as terrible. The very impetuosity of their attack, coupled with the deadliness of their aim, soon filled the Allies with fear and dismay. In less than half an hour the Spanish vice-admiral had cut his own cables and drifted toward shore in a spasmodic effort to save his ship from capture.

With the line open, the French renewed their attack with greater vigor than before. Two more flagships were compelled to cut their cables, and in the resulting panic other Dutch and Spanish ships followed suit. The French made good use of their fire-ships, through their agency burning twelve enemy men-of-war, among them a Spanish and Dutch flagship. The *Capitane* and *Steenberg*—Spanish and Dutch vessels, respectively,—blew up with fearful force, covering the surrounding bay and some of their surviving craft with burning débris.

As the flames gathered headway and communicated to neighboring sister ships, consternation seized the Allies. Wild with terror Dutch and Spaniards alike fled for refuge behind the mole. Here, subjected to new frightfulness in the form of burning balls and shot-spraying grenades, which fell in showers on the city of Palmero, they fled inland.

The victory could scarcely have been more brilliant and complete. By it the French had asserted their mastery of the waters of the Mediterranean. The very blow that had relegated the strong navy of Spain into the dust had raised the navy of France to the pinnacle of sea powers.

The famous treaty of Nimègue, signed on the 10th of August, 1678, between Louis XIV on the one side and half of Europe on the other, marked the beginning of that dazzling period of naval supremacy which, during almost fifteen years, placed France for the first and only time in her history at the head of maritime nations. The flag of every country saluted the standard that floated proudly from the mastheads of the ships of France.

Not long after this, action on the seas again became imperative for the French. The commerce of Europe had been endangered by the piratical swoops of the corsairs of Barbary. In order to effectually put a stop to these bare-faced robberies of her merchantmen France decided it was advisable to attack the miscreants in their main retreat—Algiers. To this lair it was their habit to lead their captured prizes, fortifying themselves against interference in its ample, well-caparisoned harbor. In Algiers it was truly suspected that thousands of Christian captives languished in foul prisons and in wetched servitude.

So in the summer of 1682, and again the following year, a French fleet under Duquesne and Tourville was sent to do what it could to clean out this nest of the pirates. For the first time new weapons were to be used. Among the heavy ships-of-the-line you might have seen small, flat-bottomed boats called bomb-galiots, each of which carried two mortars and four guns.

Reaching the harbor of Algiers, the Frenchmen lost no time in letting the sea-robbers know they meant business. From the warships cannon ball were thrown into the beautiful Moorish city, and from the mortars on the newly-invented galiots death-carrying, destructive bombs were rained upon the roofs of the buccaneers' homes and storehouses and places of amusement, as well as other buildings.

Palaces and mosques fell in a mass of ruins; storehouses were wrecked or burned; houses crumbled. The wives and children of the pirates, the pirates themselves, their slaves and captives, could be seen running through the streets in frantic quest of better shelter. Many captives took advantage of the terror of their brutal captors to run down to the water's edge where, with outstretched arms, they mutely plead for rescue.

Tourville—now a vice-admiral, and first in every perilous enterprise—came and went in a small boat, subjected to incessant fire from the

shore, to direct and watch the work of the mortars. His heart ached for the supplicating captives, but it would have been suicide to have attempted their rescue just then.

At length the Algerians sued for peace. But Duquesne and Tourville refused to listen until every Christian captive had been delivered from bondage. Then for five days there was silence on the bay and a respite in the city, while boatload after boatload of Christians were carried from the shore to the ships that were to take them from slavery back to their almost-God-forgotten homes. Half-starved, hollow-cheeked, ragged, eyes dulled till only the fever-flame of life's last piteous grip gave them Divine expression at all, more than seven hundred white slaves of the Barbary pirates were thus restored to liberty. It was a proud day for Duquesne and Tourville, for it had brought them a greater trophy than ever mere victory over an enemy at sea. No quantity of prize war-ships could ever equal their satisfaction at this saving of their fellow men from a cruel bondage.

## III

## COMMODORE JOHN PAUL JONES

The Stars shall glitter o'er the brave,
When death, careering on the gale,
Flag of the seas, on ocean's wave,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frightened waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack;
The dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to Heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

*—Halleck.*

ENGAGEMENT OF THE "BON HOMME RICHARD" AND THE "SERAPIS"

# Commodore John Paul Jones

## FROM TOY SHIPS TO BIG SHIPS

JOHN PAUL JONES was a man of no country, a "citizen of the world," a fighter on the side of humanity, the bitter enemy of the brutal oppressor. Likewise was he a Scottish trader, an American commodore, a French chevalier, a Russian admiral, the father of the United States Navy, the winner of the greatest sea battle of the Revolutionary War.

Fittingly has it been said of this striking seaman, "He was the Drake of the New World." Like Drake, he was a man of strong individuality and stunning contrasts, a dashing adventurer, a gracious courtier, a brilliant commander, a strict disciplinarian, a tender-hearted and loyal friend, a ferocious avenger, an invincible fighter. Unlike Drake, he held his spirit of plunder and flaming ambition under a tempering check that made him the more admirable.

Again like Drake, his name has been woven with the warp and woof of a romantic tradition and fanciful popular legendary which has clouded and distorted actual truth and the records of his-

tory. And, like Drake, he has been as much hated in Great Britain as was *L'Draque* in Spain.

John Paul was born on the 6th of July, 1747, at Arbigland, on the southern shores of Scotland. His father was a Lowlander, head gardener and game-keeper to a country squire, while his mother was a Highlander and a descendant of one of the fierce clans that had their homes among the heathered hills.

The boy had three sisters and three brothers, he being the younger. His oldest brother, William, was early adopted by a distant relative, William Jones, who had emigrated to the American colonies and lived on his plantation in Virginia. The adopted lad at once assumed the name of Jones. Little John Paul himself had never seen this brother, as he had been born three years after William departed.

John Paul's childhood sped quickly; he soon grew into a hardy, active, self-reliant lad of twelve, at which time his scanty instruction in the parish school of Kirkbean ceased. In the meanwhile he had mastered other lessons that had set his adventure-loving young soul into a wild flame of restless yearning. These lessons came from his frequent trips to Carsethorn Creek, a nearby stream where fishermen were wont to seek shelter from storm and tide and unload their cargoes of tobacco for Dumfries. In these magic waters he

had sailed his mimic boats; on the weather-worn wharves he had listened with wide-open eyes to the stirring tales of the old Scottish tars, and often watched with eager interest and keen intelligence the coming and going smacks of the fishermen as they steered their way through the narrow lanes of shipping. On these waters he had already learned to handle a yawl, and to brave the northeast squalls that so often tried the courage and skill of many an older seaman.

Young John Paul now began to beg his father to let him go to sea. His passionate longing was gratified. The father, before his son had yet reached his thirteenth year, sent him across the Solway and apprenticed him to James Younger, a prosperous merchant in the American trade. As master's-apprentice, John Paul was now a full-fledged sailor on board the *Friendship*. How proud he was! A month later, after a stormy voyage, this vessel dropped anchor in the Rappahannock River, not far from the plantation of William Jones—the relative who had adopted his eldest brother.

The meeting between the two brothers, neither of whom had ever seen the other, was a most touching one. John Paul found William Paul Jones a successful married man, and overseer upon his adopted father's plantation. While the *Friendship* lay at anchor the young boy spent

much time on land with his brother, and it was then that he was for the first time attracted to the novel and independent life of the American colonists—a life that had a peculiarly strong appeal for his own rugged spirit. William Jones took a fancy to the lad, and offered to adopt him. But while his lively interest had been awakened in the half-civilized new country, John Paul's real love was for the sea. He therefore declined, and soon sailed away for home.

For the next six years John Paul sailed on trading voyages in the ships of Mr. Younger. In this time he advanced rapidly in sea knowledge and skill. He had a keen, open mind, and a retentive memory, and never thought he "knew it all." With these characteristics he was sure to gain the utmost information and to thereby pave the way for success in his future undertakings. In 1764 he was serving as second-mate on West Indian traders; a year later he was promoted to first-mate. Then Mr. Younger retired from business, released him from his indentures, and rewarded his faithfulness with a sixth interest in a packet engaged in West Indian trade.

This packet was the *King George*. With the vessel John Paul made two voyages to the west coast of Africa after slaves. The best men of those days thought nothing wrong in such tran-

sactions, not having their minds awakened to the full horrors of the practice as have the men of to-day. So, if the conscience of John Paul pricked him a bit during these financially profitable trips, he kept the fact pretty much to himself and history never knew it.

At the end of his second voyage after slaves, our hero sold his share in the vessel to Captain Benbigh. At Kingston, Jamaica, he boarded the *John O'Gaunt* as a passenger, bound for Whitehaven.

Little did the young sailor know, or the crew, that when the trader sailed out of the Antilles and into the Atlantic Ocean she carried with her the dreadful germs of the yellow fever. Barely had she cleared the Windward Islands before the ravages of the scourge began to spread among the crew. Within a week the captain, his officers, and most of the deckhands had succumbed and their remains were consigned to the deep. Only six human beings were left on the ill-fated ship. One was John Paul, the passenger.

The young man's sea experience and sea study were now to stand him in good stead. There being none left who were competent to handle the ship, John Paul took command. With neatness and dispatch he guided the fever-stricken brig across the dangerous waters of the Atlantic, and

brought her safely into the harbor at Whitehaven. So pleased were her owners, Currie, Beck & Company, that they gave him a generous monetary reward, in addition to which they appointed him captain and supercargo of a new ship—the *John*—which was engaged in making trips to the West Indies.

In command of this vessel, John Paul made three voyages. During the course of these he again visited his brother on the Rappahannock, and the bonds of affection for America were drawn still closer.

When William Jones died in 1773 he left his entire property of three thousand acres, buildings, slaves, cattle, and a sloop, to his adopted son. The will provided that, should the adopted son die without children, the property was to go to his youngest brother, our John Paul. When the latter sailed away for England after his last visit to William, he had no thought that he was soon to return, the owner of this fine American plantation.

The ensuing two years were passed by John Paul in making voyages to the Indian Ocean as a convoy to transport ships of the East India Company. His last merchant trip was undertaken late in 1772 on the vessel *Two Friends*. Sailing by way of Lisbon, the Madeira Islands, and Tobago, he dropped anchor in the Rappahan-

nock in April of the following year. Expecting a hearty welcome from his brother, he was grief-stricken to find him lying at the point of death, quite unconscious.

At William's death John Paul became master of the large estate in Virginia. He decided to assume the name of Jones, to fit more gracefully into the title of his new possessions, and sent the *Two Friends* on her homeward voyage under the command of her first-mate, with word to her owners that he intended to become a Colonial planter.

For upwards of two years he really enjoyed the quiet and independence of the new life that had opened up to him as from the tip of a fairy's wand. During this period he left the active management of the estate to his brother's faithful overseer, and devoted the greater share of his own time to study and society. He mastered French and Spanish, naval history and tactics, diplomacy and politics. He entertained the neighboring families with lavish hospitality. He travled extensively.

Thus the poor Scottish gardener's son, educated largely by his own exertions, became a scholarly and educated American of the day. Moreover, he was soon, very soon, to make valuable use of his learning and skill in the cause of his new country.

## THE "DRAKE" AND THE "RANGER"

In the spring of 1775—that eventful spring when the war of the Revolution embroiled America and England in its toils—John Paul Jones was leisurely making his way in his sloop along the coast of New Jersey on a pleasure sail to Boston.

Upon reaching New York he encountered William Livingston. The face of the latter looked very serious. His friend saw at once that something had gone wrong, and Livingston's first words proved the correctness of his surmise.

"John, have you heard the ill news?" asked Livingston.

"I have not been favored," replied Jones. "I trust it is nothing serious concerning your own family?"

"I fear it *is* serious, but it concerns my family no more than all familes in the Colonies. John, my friend, word has just come that the British have beaten us at Lexington!"

Instantly John Paul Jones was as concerned as his friend. He plied him with many questions. After a long discussion they parted. Jones immediately gave up his plans for going to Boston; he turned the bow of his sloop back homeward, and three days later, from his plantation, was

writing Hewes and other members of the Continental Congress an offer of his services.

In June the new marine committee invited him to lay before them any information and advice he could on the selection of suitable naval officers and ships for the beginning of a navy with which to defend the American seaboard from the craft of England.

John Paul Jones's suggestions met with favor. As a consequence steps were at once taken for carrying them out with speed and dispatch.

The first squadron of our navy consisted of four ships—the frigates *Alfred* and *Columbus,* and the brigantines *Andrea Doria* and *Cabot.* The first list of officers embraced five captains, five first-lieutenants, and eight junior-lieutenants. In this list John Paul Jones stood at the head of the first-lieutenants. Favoritism among some of the powerful members of the marine committee kept him out of the list of captains, a position to which his high attainments surely qualified him.

Of course Jones felt the injustice of it all. But in his disinterestedness of self and broad love of service for service's sake, he made no allusion to the slight except in a letter sent about that time to Joseph Hewes. In this he says: "I am here to serve the cause of human rights, not to promote the fortunes of John Paul Jones. . . . I will cheerfully enter upon the duties of first-lieutenant

of the *Alfred* under Captain Saltonstall. Time will make all things even." And time did "make all things even," as we shall see.

Not until the 17th of February was the little American squadron ready for sea. On that day the light, sleek ships sailed out of Delaware Bay and headed for the Bahama Islands. Almost two months later the squadron returned to home shores after a cruise that was productive of little more than a showing of disgraceful incompetence on the part of many of the officers. As a result, captains appointed through influence and favoritism were dismissed, while Jones was honorably retained and given an independent command.

The *Providence,* his new ship, was a small sloop of fourteen guns. After using her to transport troops and stores between New London and New York, and convoying American ships along the coast, he went out for six weeks to harass British commerce. With a crew of seventy men he sped through waters swarming with British frigates, from the Bermudas to Nova Scotia. He destroyed the enemy's fisheries at Canso, and made two daring descents on the island of Madame. In all sixteen prizes fell into his daring hands, besides a large number of fishing-smacks. Eight were manned, the remainder destroyed for want of sailors with which to sail them home.

Near the Bermudas he encountered the British ship *Solebay* of twenty-eight nine-pounders. For six hours he was chased by the more powerful enemy, part of the time within range and once almost within the *Solebay's* clutches. But, by a very clever maneuver that surprised and caught the Britisher at a disadvantage, the American frigate succeeded in showing her a clean pair of heels.

Believing that he could be of much more service to the American cause in foreign waters than at home, he began to appeal for permission to sail to the English and Irish channels. Final recognition came from General Washington himself who said, "Captain Jones, you have conceived the right project, and you are the right man to execute it."

The result was an appointment to command the new sloop-of-war *Ranger,* which carried twenty six-pounders. The Scotch commodore was told to hold himself in readiness for a swift sail to France to carry dispatches of the highest importance. The *Ranger* stood out to sea on November 1st, 1777. The news she carried was the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga.

Spreading every inch of canvas that he could, Jones forced his ship through the Atlantic at topmost speed. By day the stanch little *Ranger* staggered on in the teeth of heavy northeast

winds and blinding snow squalls; by night, beating her way through darkness and blanket fog, she continued just as bravely but with necessarily diminished speed. The second-lieutenant states that the Commodore declared he would "spread this news in France in thirty days." The way the sloop bounded along surely looked as if he would keep his promise.

On the last day of the run the *Ranger* captured two prizes. December 2nd she sailed into the Loire and dropped anchor at Nantes. Commodore Jones hurried to Paris with his packet of news, only to find that he had been outstripped. Mr. Austin, who had sailed from Boston two days earlier with duplicate messages, had arrived just twenty-four hours before. But this was not the only disappointment to greet Jones in Europe. He had been promised a large new frigate, built at a neutral Dutch dockyard for the United States. On reaching Paris he discovered that the vessel, for political reasons, had been sold to France.

So, instead of starting on his long-cherished cruise in British waters on the deck of a forty-six-gun frigate, he was forced to content himself with his little sloop of less than half that armament. It was a dark outlook. Nobody but a dauntless commander and an equally dauntless

crew would ever have thought of bearding the lion in his den with such an insignificant craft. In fact, most captains would have turned back home, disgruntled and timorous. Not so John Paul Jones. With what he had he would do the best he could.

The Scotchman gave his ship a thorough refitting, and early in February he sailed into the harbor of Brest. A dense mass of ships-rigging filled the roadstead. Jones saw that it was the great French fleet under Count d'Orvilliers. Bent upon upholding the honor of the new American flag, which was gayly flying from his masthead, the Scotch Commodore asked, as a condition of his entering the port, that a salute be given his colors. His request was granted. As the national emblem passed with dignity through the lanes of heavy battleships, the French guns roared out the first salute ever given by a foreign navy to the standard of the United States of America.

Just one week earlier the Treaty of Alliance between the two countries, which first recognized American independence, had been signed at Versailles. The salute to the flag was a temperamental seal to the treaty. To Jones it was a matter of strong personal feeling. Not long before, when the same resolution of Congress that had appointed him to the command of the *Ranger*

had also decreed that the national flag should be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, and thirteen stars in a blue field, he had said, "The flag and I are twins." This association was now strong upon him.

On the morning of April 24th the *Ranger* was off Carrickfergus, on the north coast of Ireland. Inside the harbor, and just on the point of coming out, was the *Drake,* a British sloop-of-war of twenty guns. Contrary winds and an incoming tide had delayed her. Now, as she saw the stranger in the offing, she sent out one of her boats to reconnoiter him. Lured on by the innocent-looking stern of the *Ranger,* the British scout came a little too near. The first thing her crew knew they were pounced on and made prisoners.

Apparently the *Drake* resolved to see why her men failed to come back. Out she came just before sunset, approaching within hail in mid-channel. The British flag went fluttering up to her masthead. At the same time the Stars and Stripes was flung out to the breezes by the *Ranger.*

"Ahoy! what ship is that?" bawled the British captain. It was an unnecessary inquiry—one fraught with the confusion of the moment. The answer was perhaps as equally unnecessary. But it came:

"The American Continental ship *Ranger!* Come on; we are waiting for you!"

Scarcely had the last word of the reply died away when there came a raking broadside from the American at close range. The *Drake* bore up, and poured back her own shot.

Then for more than an hour the firing was continued, deluge after deluge of lead being thrown from one ship at the other. But the aim of the British gunners was not as good as that of the Americans. Most of the enemy fire passed harmlessly overhead or fell short, while that of the men on the *Ranger* as a rule found some telling mark.

After a while the *Drake* was in a sad plight. Her spars and rigging were hanging in shot-cut dilapidation and uselessness; her sails were fluttering and flapping remnants of riven canvas; her hull was polkadotted with further evidence of the good marksmanship of her adversary. Her commander fell, killed by a ball. Here and there on her deck lay many of her crew, wounded and dead. At last, when she had become "an unmanageable log on the water" she struck her colors, and was boarded by the victors.

The capture of the *Drake* was the first brilliant naval success of the war. The ships themselves were small and unimportant, it is true, but the results were large in comparison, and a great

moral victory had been accomplished. This triumphant cruise of the little hornet in waters far from home, her seizure of numbers of prizes, her bold fire-brandery in the harbor at Whitehaven, and her even bolder capture of His Majesty's ship *Drake* right under the noses of the British nation, not only formed a grand and dramatic début of the new-born navy of the United States, but it aroused and alarmed the enemy coast, filling all Englishmen with stunned surprise, indignation and humility.

In addition, it gratified and won the admiration of France, the foe of Britain and friend of America. And most important of all, it brought to the bitterly-tried hearts of the Colonists in the distant new republic new courage, new confidence, new strength and new visions.

## THE "BON HOMME RICHARD" AND THE "SERAPIS"

When he reached Brest with his prize, which was the first trophy of the war to reach France, John Paul Jones found his own vessel in such a deplorable condition that he saw it would take long weeks to put it once more in condition for service against the enemy.

During this time he was thrown upon his own resources through the poverty of the Conti-

nental government and the dishonoring of his draft by the commissioners. In order to provide food for his crew and supplies for his ship, he was forced to sell his prize. This act so displeased his government that he was asked to hand over the command of the *Ranger* to her first-lieutenant. So when the ship finally sailed for home that fall, Jones was left in a foreign land with no prospect of a ship to rest his feet upon.

It was truly a cheerless outlook. Furthermore, his treatment by Congress had much hurt the brave man's heart. But he was not the kind either to grow bitter against his country or to grow hopeless.

John Paul Jones had two powerful friends in France. These were the Duke de Chartres, eldest son of the Duke d'Orleans, and his wife, the Duchess de Chartres. Through them he was able to interest the King into providing him with a ship, the *L'Duras*, of forty guns. She was a very old craft. After spending three months in overhauling her, she was still not much better than a makeshift warship, for her batteries were mounted with the refuse guns of the French government—old rusty, loose-jointed relics that had served their real usefulness and were liable to blow to pieces when fired with a heavy charge.

His crew, too, was a motley and ill-assorted bunch. Of the three hundred and seventy-five men whom he was able to collect, only fifty were Americans; the rest were French, Portuguese, and British. Fortunately, before the final date of sailing, the exchange of British and American prisoners of war gave him the opportunity of replacing some of his alien seamen with one hundred and fourteen Americans. As he stood and viewed the muscular bodies and keen eyes of these fellows he breathed easier.

All arrangements were completed in August, 1779. By that time the *L'Duras*—whose name Jones had changed to *Bon Homme Richard,* out of compliment to Benjamin Franklin—had been converted into a fairly-efficient looking man-of-war. Besides the *Bon Homme Richard,* the squadron consisted of several smaller vessels, all commanded and crewed by Frenchmen. There was the *Alliance,* Captain Landais, a frigate of thirty-six guns; the *Pallas,* a frigate of twenty-eight guns, and the *Vengeance,* a brig of twelve guns. All excepting the *Alliance* belonged to the King, and French money paid the expenses of the expedition. Yet the ships sailed and the men fought under the American flag, and the French officers were for the time being commissioned officers of the United States.

Commodore Jones himself was looked upon as an irresponsible adventurer by most of the

French officers, who were very jealous of the praise he had won from their countrymen for taking the British frigate *Drake*. It cannot be wondered at, therefore, that there was a good deal of discontent.

The squadron finally set sail from L'Orient at daybreak, on the 14th of the month. The projected cruise was to cover a circle around the British Islands and end at the Texel. Through calms and gales and shifting winds John Paul Jones worked his way up the west coast of Scotland, and then beat down the east coast as far as the Firth of Forth. Finally they reached Spurn Head. In the meantime a number of seamen had deserted, most of the captains had shown a rebellious disposition, and Captain Landais had revolted to the extent of separating, with his ship, the *Alliance*, from the rest of the squadron. In spite of these drawbacks a number of prizes had been taken and sent to friendly ports with prize-crews.

On September 22d news was brought to Jones by a passing friendly vessel that a large Baltic fleet of British vessels, laden with naval stores bound for England, had arrived in Bridlington Bay under convoy and was waiting for favorable winds to proceed on to the Downs.

Commodore Jones felt a great leap of his heart. The moment he had passionately longed for had

come at last. This was the finest kind of a chance to hit England a staggering blow. Signaling his consorts to follow, he headed northward for Flamborough Head. The following morning found his squadron twelve miles at sea, just north of Bridlington Bay.

With his glass he scanned the harbor. He saw moving craft, headed outward. If his heart had leaped before it now fairly jumped out of his broad chest. Still watching, he observed the Baltic fleet sail out of the bay, and hugging close to land, scamper for the shelter of Scarborough.

Instantly up to the masthead of the *Bon Homme Richard* went the signal for the chase. Then, noting their enemy after them, the merchant ships of Britain crowded sail, and their two escort ships moved out menacingly, like mother hens, to protect their retreat.

Commodore Jones was nothing loth. In fact he was far more eager for a fight than they. At once he accepted the challenge, changed his course slightly, and bore down upon the British warships. The *Alliance,* which had for a long time been keeping at a distance, surly as a spoiled child, paid no attention to Jones's signal to form a battle line. On the contrary she stubbornly kept her place, and even had the audacity to signal the little *Vengeance,* "Lie to as you are; you are

not big enough to bear a hand in this." The *Vengeance* obeyed the order of the rebellious Captain Landais, thus leaving only the *Pallas* loyally to follow after the *Bon Homme Richard.*

The British escort ships were the *Serapis,* a new forty-four gun frigate, and the sloop-of-war *Countess of Scarborough.* Captain Cottineau, of the *Pallas,* gave chase to the sloop, which was running out to leeward, and during the coming fight he was so fully occupied in capturing her that he could render no assistance to his commander-in-chief. Thus Commodore Jones was left single-handed to face the formidable Britisher *Serapis*—left to fight it out on an old rotten hulk that should have been made into firewood long before it ever came into his hands. To make matters worse, his crew was foreign and unskilled and uncoöperative, while Captain Pearson of the *Serapis* possessed men of the highest degree of training, perfectly organized. That this fight resulted in a victory for Jones is one of the most remarkable tributes to the generalship and fighting qualities of the man that could ever be paid him. Let us see how it all came about.

It was seven o'clock in the evening before the two vessels came within striking distance. As the *Bon Homme Richard* came up, Captain Pearson sent a shot whistling toward her. There was

no answer. After scanning her in the fast-dimming light with his night glasses, he said to his first-lieutenant: "It is probably John Paul Jones. If so there is work ahead for us!" Then he hailed again—with another whistling shot.

This time there was an answer. The darkness about the stranger was split with fiery forks of flame; there was a terrible roar—and a broadside sent its iron pellets toward the *Serapis,* several of them striking their mark. Captain Pearson was now quite positive of the identity of the stranger's commander.

By this time the ships were within six hundred feet of one another. A light but steady wind was blowing from the southwest. The sea was smooth and comparatively peaceful. Soon both ships were engaged in the hottest kind of firing. Broadside sent its challenge, was accepted and answered by broadside. The surroundings were almost constantly bathed in the pale, livid light of flashing gunpowder, the contesting ships standing out like grim, black specters of the deep. The night air was split and shattered by the crash of cannon, the roar of mortar, the rattle of musketry, the crash of mast, the splintering of hull, the wild and triumphant cries of men, and the hoarse shouts of alarm and death-shrieks of other men.

In the midst of it all there came a rending

roar, more portentous, more dreadful of inflection that all other sounds, from the direction of the *Bon Homme Richard.* The inevitable had transpired. Riven with rust pits, weakened from long usage, two of the *Richard's* old eighteen-pounders had burst. They had formed a part of the steerage battery, just under the main deck, aft. The explosion killed or wounded most of the gun crews, and demoralized the crews of the four remaining eighteen-pounders, who refused to risk their lives longer in firing them. Thus at the very beginning Jones found himself greatly handicapped anew.

A quiet word to his pilot, and the *Bon Homme Richard* now began to drift closer in upon her antagonist. As the distance between them decreased, the deadliness of fire of both vessels increased. Now pistols could be used; and the din of their rattle was added to the other fulmination of sounds. The rotten timbers of the American ship was a veritable pincushion for the projectiles of the British gunners. They stuck in the old hull everywhere, and in places great gaping holes appeared. But the *Serapis* was far from escaping her share of the damage. Her hull, too, showed many marks of well-aimed shot; her decks were littered with dead and wounded.

The ships drifted slowly apart, still fighting madly. Lead rained down upon both crews as

if the heavens themselves had turned storm-wrath into bullets. Nine of the *Richard's* twelve-pounders had been abandoned; eighty men of the main battery had been struck down. The condition of her deck was terrible to behold. The wreckage of rigging and cabin was scattered everywhere; stark, red-stained bodies lay here and there; wounded, with agonized countenance and moaning lips, propped themselves against every conceivable support; the living and unhurt, with shirt-stripped bodies as black from powder-mark as a negro's, sprang wildly from point to point, loading and firing their pieces like mad-men.

Matters below decks were even more alarming. The hull had been pierced by several heavy cannon ball, and the water was pouring in very fast. Already four feet deep in the hold, it was steadily increasing.

Noting this situation Commodore Jones hurried up to his first-lieutenant, Richard Dale. "Dick," he said, "his metal is too heavy for us at this business. He is hammering our old wood hull all to pieces. We must attempt to get hold of him again!"

It was really his last chance, his only hope. By a skillful maneuver he rounded the bow of the *Serapis* and suddenly came in upon her a little from the quarter. The enemy ship's jib-boom

ran over the *Bon Homme Richard's* poop-deck. Before it could get away two of the American sailors had seized it, and Jones himself jumped up and lashed it fast to his ship's mizzenmast. This brought both ships together, side by side. Their cannon all but touched. The starboard anchor of the *Serapis* was hooked in the *Richard's* mizzen chains. It was a secure lock. The rest of that furious fight must from now on be still more furious—a hand-to-hand struggle to the very death.

At this juncture some of his officers came up to John Paul Jones, and attempted to persuade him to strike his colors. As he was about vehemently to reply, an under-officer, crazed with fear, shouted loudly to the British frigate: "*Serapis* ahoy! Will your commander grant us quarter?"

The indomitable Scotchman's face turned red with anger at this flagrant breach of discipline and show of weakness. Only the hail of Captain Pearson saved the cowardly officer from being knocked to the deck.

"Does your commander himself call for quarter?" asked the British captain.

Glancing up to his masthead, Jones was surprised to note for the first time that his ensign had been shot away. Stepping forward on the poop-deck he called back: "Quarter nothing! We have just begun to fight!"

Captain Pearson was stunned. Coming from any other man, he might have thought this defiant reply mere bravado. But he had heard enough about John Paul Jones to know he meant every word of it. In the beginning he could not understand why the call for quarter had come; only the absent ensign had impelled him to answer the under-officer's appeal.

Commodore Jones now sprang on the quarter-deck, and became at once the life and center of the defense. He rallied his men at the battery, shifted over one of the guns himself, and directed the fire. Then he dashed among the French marines, cheered and exhorted them in their own tongue with his great voice, and even took the muskets from some of them to set them an example in good firing.

The sole chance of victory plainly lay in clearing the enemy's decks. To do this everything depended upon the unswerving aim of the sailors in the tops and the marines on the decks. If the crew of the *Serapis* should succeed in casting off the lashings that held the two ships together, the fate of the *Bon Homme Richard* would be sealed. Himself directing all his energies to the defense of the grapples for a time, until the men understood the work, Jones next turned his attention to clearing the enemy's decks.

In a short time the foe could no longer stand

to his wheel or handle his sail. It was instant death to any British sailor who tried to touch a brace, sheet, or halliard. Their forecastle was soon abandoned by officers and men alike.

At this stage—about half-past nine—Commodore Jones made out the *Alliance* coming up. He was filled with joy. With the aid of his sulking consort, who had probably repented, he could soon gain the mastery.

But it was a false hope. To his surprise and indignation, Captain Landais drew up and calmly discharged a full broadside into the stern of the *Bon Homme Richard!* Believing his rebellious officer must have mistaken him in the darkness for the enemy, the Commodore now displayed three lanterns in a horizontal line—a signal of his identity.

The *Alliance* moved around a bit, there was another flash of flame along her hull, a roar, and once more came the thud of crunching wood in the *Richard's* hull, and several of her crew fell in their tracks. Another swing, and another broadside came hurtling into the sister ship. More men fell, a shot pierced the old hull below the waterline, and another leak was added to her too-plentiful troubles.

John Paul Jones stood aghast. He could hardly bring himself to credit the Frenchman's treachery. He probably pinched himself to see

if he were not asleep and dreaming. Slowly the terrible truth dawned on him—the *Alliance* had really turned traitor! Instead of a friend, she too was an enemy!

The commander of the *Bon Homme Richard* smiled. But it was a grim smile, a smile that boded ill for somebody in short order. The more enemies the better he could fight. Now let them watch out!

By this time the condition of the *Richard* was indeed desperate. Fire had broken out in the lower deck, and the flames, eating their way hungrily through the splinters that were everywhere to feed them, licked their way toward the powder-magazine. Five feet of water were in the hold; the ship was slowly sinking.

And still Jones's resources were not exhausted. Although the enemy's upper decks had been cleared, the lower tier, being covered, were untouched. The Commodore now suggested dropping hand-grenades through the *Serapis's* main-hatch into this lower tier. For the purpose Midshipman Fanning, acting-gunner, and two seamen were ordered aloft into the maintop. Armed with two buckets of grenades and a slow-match, these four men lay out on the yard-arm.

The hatch was only partly open, leaving a hole not more than two feet wide. But the main yard-arm of the *Bon Homme Richard* overhung it.

Fanning, who was known as a good thrower, was to do the casting. His first two grenades missed, but the third one went fairly into the opening.

A terrible explosion followed. The hatch of the British frigate was blown high into the air, more than fifty men were killed or maimed, and the after part of the lower tier silenced.

Just as the crew on the *Bon Homme Richard* were wildly cheering this exploit, the *Alliance* bore down for the second time upon her sister ship. Coming up within musket-shot she again raked the shattered and sorely-distressed vessel that was flying her own colors. Fired at alike by friend and foe it seemed the height of folly for Jones to persist, but he did. It was the fighting-strain in his Scotch blood, inherited from his Highland mother's male ancestors, that made him fight on and on, knowing no defeat, till death might claim him.

Directing one of his gunners to aim for the mainmast of the *Serapis,* Jones soon had the satisfaction of seeing splinters fly and the mast waver. Another shot, and it sloughed, crashing into the sea, carrying with it rigging, and throwing up a geyser of spray far above the deck.

Already the Commodore stood by with a picked party of boarders. Armed with pistols and cutlasses every man was ready for the last act. Jones now gave the signal, and the men,

shouting loudly, and under the command of Acting-Lieutenant John Mayrant, plunged over the hammock netting and down into the fore-hold of the *Serapis*. Meeting with little opposition, they were soon in full possession, and rushed toward the quarter-deck.

Seeing the hopelessness of resistance, Captain Pearson struck his colors. Not knowing this, his first-lieutenant rushed up a moment later, and asked, "Has the enemy struck, sir?"

"No, sir; *I* have struck," replied Pearson with tears in his eyes.

It was the first time the British flag on a man-of-war was ever struck to the Stars-and-Stripes!

Although the enemy had surrendered there was still much work to do for the crew of the *Bon Homme Richard*. Victorious as she was, she was rapidly sinking, her old wounds having grown larger. Seven feet of water filled her hold. The pumps, still manned by the British prisoners, were beginning to choke. Of her former crew only a hundred men were left unwounded, nearly every gun had been dismounted, her starboard side was completely stove in, and the flames were breaking out afresh, threatening to consume her or cause her magazine to blow her into a thousand bits. One alleviating circumstance was that the profligate *Alliance,* having observed that the crew she so cravenly hated

had won the fight, had slunk away in the darkness and no longer contributed to the distress of the *Richard*.

As may be surmised the crew of the latter ship had very little sleep the remainder of that night. When another day dawned, all of the wounded were removed to the *Serapis,* also the prisoners. Before any of the stores could be saved, she had begun to list badly, and it was deemed dangerous to remain any longer on her.

All that night, however, the old shot-torn craft kept proudly afloat. Too much glory surrounded her for her to perish when eyes could not see. The first golden rays of next morning's sun still found her afloat. They caressed her pitiful ragged hulk into a brightness of unusual nobility and charm, and bathed the faces of the dead, lying in long tiers on her deck, in a holy radiance.

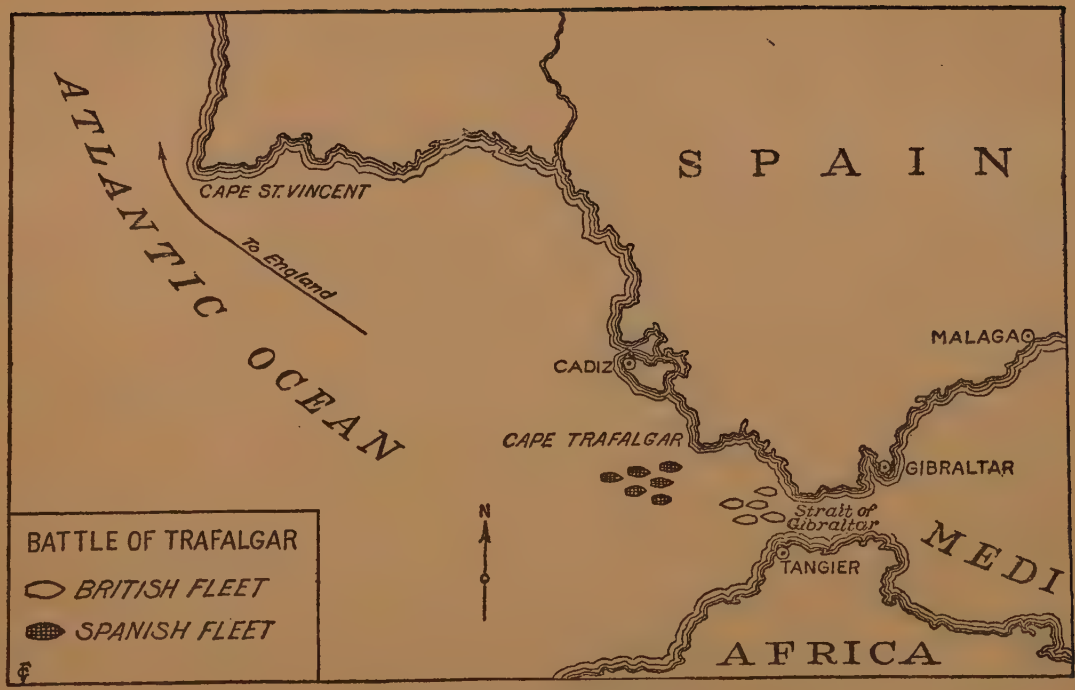
Suddenly she seemed to shudder. Then her head was seen to slowly bend. Lower and lower it sank, till the waves were lapping close to her jibboom. There was a momentary pause, as if she were halting to take a last look at the scene of her sacrifice, when, with a rare dignity, she went down. As she plunged into the great depths awaiting her, her taffrail momentarily rose in the air. And the very last vestige mortal eye ever saw of the *Bon Homme Richard* was her waving, tattered flag, still unstruck!

## IV

## LORD HORATIO NELSON

His few surviving comrades saw
His smile, when rang their proud hurrah,
  And the red field was won;
They saw in death his eyelids close,
Calmly, as to a night's repose,
  Like flowers at set of sun.

– *Halleck.*




THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

# Lord Horatio Nelson

## A GREAT SEA KING

THE deeds of Lord Nelson, Britain's greatest sea hero, form a dramatic chapter of life which should be a torch to fire the admiration of every boy in the land no matter from what country he hails. Especially should Nelson's exploits prove stimulating reading to the lad who is physically frail and has the erronous idea that the only robust boys and men ever excel in feats of red-blooded daring.

To have looked at Horatio Nelson's thin, pale face and slender body—particularly to have known of his frequent illnesses—you would never have connected him with great accomplishments requiring the snappy action of a healthy, vigorous mind, and the equally snappy action of a fearless, obstinate fighter. The development of this boy into England's foremost sea-fighter astonished his youthful playmates and acquaintances quite as much as you, or one of your young friends of a "weak constitution" may sometime surprise your boyhood comrades.

Nelson's life was a perfect drama in its happy rise, its glorious course, its heart-stirring ending.

The spot-light struck his figure when he was thirty-nine; at forty-seven his stage was steeped in darkness. But in those eventful eight years he had won his trio of marvelous triumphs,—Aboukir, Copenhagen, Trafalgar,—made Great Britain "mistress of the seas," and left a memory of such splendor behind him that his name will ever be dear to his countrymen and known to all future generations of reading peoples.

This great man was born on the 29th of September, 1758, at Norfolk, on the eastern coast of England. His schooling was scant. Although of a weak and sickly constitution his ambition from boyhood was to be a seaman, and when in 1770 he heard that his uncle, Maurice Suckling, had been appointed to the command of the *Raisonable,* he begged to join him. On this ship he sailed to the Falkland Islands, being then just twelve years old. A little later he made a year's voyage on a West Indian merchantman, on which he learned the essentials of his profession.

In 1773 an expedition was fitted out by the Royal Geographical Society to sail to the North Pole. Young Nelson, then only fourteen, was wild to go. As no boys were allowed by the Admiralty he almost failed in this endeavor, but finally prevailed upon Captain Lutwidge, of the *Carcas,* to let him be a member as coxswain.

When he returned from the ice-bound seas the year following he was a full-fledged able seaman.

Then came a three-years' voyage to the East Indies under Admiral Hughes. This cruise, along fever-stricken, marshy shores, undermined his none-too-rugged health. A long sickness ensued which came very near resulting in his end. For at least one moment in his life he felt an overpowering despondency. He saw before him the towering obstacles he must meet with in his chosen profession, and the tiny, puny, physical strength he had with which to meet them. His ambition consumed him, but his mind could see no way to satisfy it. This is how he afterward refers to it: "After a long and gloomy revery, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden flow of patriotism was kindled within me, and I saw my King and countrymen very much smaller and weaker than I, needing my aid. My mind exulted in the idea. 'Well, then,' I exclaimed, 'I will be a hero, and, confiding in Providence, I will brave every danger!' "

In those early years, and throughout his entire lifetime, duty and fame, in the order given, were the two thoughts that appealed to him most strongly, the two thoughts that constantly spurred on his endeavors. Duty kindled in him the most fearless and unswerving devotion to his

fellowmen; renown lured him ever onward with its radiant, glittering honors.

Nelson's promotion was swift. In July, 1778, he had won a first-lieutenancy on the *Bristol,* the flagship of Sir Peter Parker. Six months later he was appointed commander of the *Badger,* a brig. Then came a change to post-captain of the frigate *Hinchingbrook,* with which he proceeded against American privateers among the West Indies.

Finally, on February 1st, 1793, France declared war against Great Britain and Holland. Anticipating trouble, two days before his government had appointed Nelson to the *Agamemnon,* a sixty-four-gun ship.

During the ensuing four years, Nelson took part in many minor engagements, all helpful to his cause. Among these were the investments of Marseilles and Toulon, and the blockading of Bastia. In the latter action, while serving the battery, a shot of the enemy drove a quantity of sand in his right eye which eventually destroyed its sight.

The chief event marking the opening of 1797 was the first important naval operation connected with his name. This was the battle of Cape St. Vincent, fought against the Spaniards, the allies of France.

At dawn, on the 14th of February, the British

fleet of fifteen ships, under Sir John Jarvis, lay twenty-five miles west of Cape St. Vincent on the southern coast of Portugal. A heavy fog darkened the morning. Soon after eight o'clock this lifted, and there, coming toward them, the lookouts on the British vessels saw the grand fleet of Spain. The sight was enough to awaken apprehensions, for there were twenty-seven huge ships. Among these were the great *Santissima Trinidād,* carrying one hundred and twenty-six guns, and the *San Josef* of one hundred and twelve guns. One was a four-decker—the largest type of ship afloat,—and seven were three-deckers. The Spanish ships were in two sections, arranged in a most awkward line of battle, seemingly unable to unite.

Meanwhile the British admiral made the signal to prepare. At eleven o'clock the line was formed, and at eleven-thirty action began. Nelson's ship was thirteenth in line. The plan of Sir John was to run between the two divisions of the enemy's fleet, thus preventing their junction, and then assail them separately.

When he had succeeded in dividing them in this manner, he made the signal to "tack in succession." At this moment Nelson's chance came in. Seeing that it was the intention of the Spanish admiral to run behind the British column and unite his lines, Nelson, without orders, passed

from the rear, between the *Diadem* and *Excellent*. Reaching the Spanish column ahead of his compatriots, he engaged single-handed the huge and formidable *Santissima Trinidad*.

Shortly the *Culloden*, leader of the British van, came to his support, and for an hour the two plucky British ships had their hands full; for by this time nine other Spanish vessels had come to the aid of their great consort. Then the pair of British boats were joined by the *Blenheim* and the *Excellent*, and the enemy craft *San Ysidro* and *Salvador del Mundo* were compelled to strike their colors.

Nelson's own ship, the *Captain*, had suffered considerable damage. There was not a sail, shroud, or halliard, left intact; her wheel had been shot away. She was quite incapable of making chase, or fleeing under chase. Happily she had neither to do just now. She had been worked up alongside the *San Nicolas*, and the next instant Nelson ordered a party to board her. Captain Berry was the first to leap to the Spaniard's deck. He was quickly followed by Nelson himself. A few volleys of musket and pistol shot were exchanged, then the enemy backed away. Berry gained possession of the poop and hauled down the Spanish colors. At the same time Nelson, on the forecastle, received the swords of the Spanish officers.

Just at this time the *San Josef* came to the aid of her distressed sister-ship, firing on the British abroad the *San Nicolas.* At this Nelson promptly called for reënforcements from the *Captain.* Without waiting for these, the intrepid Englishman then ran across to the farther side of the enemy's deck and sprang to the rail of a large three-deck Spanish ship which lay close on that quarter.

As he gained the deck of the second enemy craft, he met a Spanish officer. Apparently believing that the British had boarded him also, and that resistance was hopeless, this officer at once gave his sword to the dauntless Nelson, who, quite dumfounded, received it, and listened to the Spaniard's words, "We surrender."

A little later the *Victory,* Admiral Jervis's flagship, passed the disabled *Captain* and its two magnificent prizes, and saluted with three cheers, as did every ship in the fleet.

On the 14th of July, 1797, Nelson, now a rear-admiral, received orders to sail for Santa Cruz. Information had come that a Spanish ship, the *El Principle d'Asturias,* was in this harbor, and would sail shortly to Cadiz with a rich treasure belonging to the crown of Spain which she had brought on from Manila.

Four warships and three frigates, carrying a landing party of a thousand men under Captain

Troubridge, and one cutter, made up Nelson's squadron. He had planned a sudden and vigorous attack. Upon arrival, the boats, with troops and scaling-ladders, were ordered to land in the night, but a heavy gale of wind and a strong current prevented. The next day it was hoped to storm the heights behind the forts, while the ships discharged their batteries from in front. But when morning came calms and contrary currents kept the large ships out of range, this condition prevailing for several days.

By the 24th of July the Spaniards, who could readily see the British ships, had had four days in which to strengthen their works and increase the number of their troops. Nelson straightway made up his mind to do something at once. That day he wrote to Jervis: "To-morrow my head will probably be crowned with either laurel or cypress." There was, indeed, small hope for success.

That night about eleven o'clock the boats advanced quietly toward the town with seven hundred and fifty men. Nelson's barge led the way. Hardly had they proceeded to within half-gunshot of the mole than they were discovered, and a sharp fire of cannon and musketry opened upon them from one end of the town to the other.

The sky was dark, and the surf high. A number of the boats missed the landing; they were

full of water in a minute, and stove in on the rocks. The ladders were all lost in the surf; the ammunition was wet and useless. But the other barges reached the mole successfully. Led by Nelson, the British stormed it, drove back the five hundred Spaniards defending it, and prepared for further advance. However, such a heavy fire came from the citadel and town that the British began to fall on all sides, and they were forced to retreat in the face of the terrible shower of bullets.

Already a grapeshot had struck Nelson in the right elbow. His stepson, Josiah Nisbet, had placed him in the bottom of his boat, bandaged the wound tightly, and rowed back to the ships. As they neared them, a ball struck the cutter *Fox* beneath her waterline, and she went down. Although suffering intense pain from his wound, Nelson insisted on stopping to save the men struggling in the water.

When they finally reached the *Theseus*, a rope was thrown over. With a rare display of fortitude, Nelson climbed this to the ship's deck, and immediately called the surgeon to bring his instruments, for he knew his arm must be amputated.

His feelings when he returned to his home shores after this mishap, with the defeat at Santa Cruz also on his mind, must have been bitter.

To add to his troubles, the amputation had been crudely done, and for long weeks he suffered tortures from the imperfect surgery.

Yet it was after this, when he went forth again —a one-eyed and one-armed fighter—that the glorious luster of his renown attained the pinnacle of its height, to burn undimmed to the end.

## THE FIGHT OF THE NILE

FRANCE had made peace with most of the continental powers and had extended her influence over all adjoining countries. In the spring of 1798 she was concentrating her forces against Great Britain with the avowed purpose of destroying the British monarchy. Active preparations were being urged forward in the seaport towns of the Mediterranean, both at the southern ports of France and at the friendly ports of Italy. Ships-of-the-line, transports and troops were assembling in large numbers. An extensive naval expedition was evidently being planned.

This operation, which afterward proved to be the famous expedition of General Bonaparte to Egypt, was kept such a profound secret that its destination was not even surmised by the British. But the British government was sufficiently

alarmed to cause it to decide to abandon its purely defensive tactics and to assume an offensive attitude.

At this stage Nelson, in command of the *Vanguard,* a seventy-four-gun ship, was off Cadiz with Lord St. Vincent. The latter now gave him two ships-of-the-line, the *Orion* and the *Alexander,* and four frigates, and sent him to watch Toulon and follow the movements of the French fleet.

From off Cape Sicie, Nelson soon after reported that nineteen sail lay in the harbor of Toulon; that transports with troops frequently arrived from Marseilles; that twelve thousand men were already aboard the warships, and that hearsay had it the fleet would sail for an unknown port in a few days.

Unhappily, the French fleet succeeded in slipping out of the harbor without Nelson detecting the fact until too late. This was owing to a strong gale dismantling the *Vanguard* and rendering it necessary to tow her to a port on the coast of Sardinia for repairs. The same storm drove the other vessels far apart, and precious days were lost in reassembling them.

Thus it was not until the 7th of June that Nelson, bolstered by the addition of ten other ships from St. Vincent, took up his famous pursuit of Bonaparte. He had been ordered to at-

tack him wherever found. The French had a long start, and all that Nelson knew of them was that they had sailed southward between Italy and Corsica, and had been seen by a passing vessel off the north end of Sicily, steering to the eastward.

With this clew, the British squadron made off under full spread of canvas. As they went along, from time to time they picked up additional fragments of news regarding the chased which helped them materially to shape their course.

It was a long and tedious search. There were times when they expected to come within sight of the enemy at any moment; other times when they almost despaired of ever seeing him. The want of fast frigates hampered Nelson a good deal, his heavy warships not having the requisite speed for a stern chase of this character.

On the 15th of June he learned from a Tunisian cruiser that the French had been seen off Trapani in Sicily; on the 26th news came off Cape Passaro that the enemy had arrived and possessed themselves of Malta, and then gone eastward. From this Nelson was now pretty well convinced that Bonaparte intended to take some port in Egypt, establish himself at the head of the Red Sea, and carry a formidable army into Hindustan. If this surmise were cor-

rect, British interests in India were in great danger.

But if to Egypt, where in Egypt had they gone? After a consultation with his most trusted captains, Nelson decided to head for Alexandria.

Cruel suspense marked the next few days of the chase. Every moment, night and day, the lookouts in the foretops were at their posts, hoping to be able to report the first sight of the French. But disappointment still prevailed.

Alexandria was reported in view on the 20th. Not a French sail was to be seen, nor could any information be gathered of the whereabouts of the other fleet. Nelson was much downcast, even mortified. His judgment for once had played him a trick. He did not know that he had really outstripped his adversary; that his unerring reasoning power had led him to Alexandria before Bonaparte had arrived. The truth was, the French fleet had veered to the south shore of Candia, and strange as it may be, under cover of the night and a dense fog, the two rival forces had at one time been within gun range of one another without knowing it.

Not aware of this, Nelson now stretched his ships over the coast of Asia, then steered along the northern shore of the Mediterranean, passed Candia once more, and returned to Syracuse

sorely disappointed and humiliated, after a cruise of twenty-seven days.

On the 23rd of July, not to be thwarted, Nelson again set out in quest of the elusive French. Once more he sailed eastward and southward, still convinced that Egypt was the goal of the enemy but puzzled at his inexplicable disappearance. Six days later he sighted the Pharos of Alexandria—and there, in Aboukir Bay, fifteen miles from the port, rode the French fleet in solid battle array!

Nelson was not found unprepared. All through that long chase it had been his custom to hold almost daily conferences with his captains, during the courses of which plans for attack or defense under every conceivable condition had been worked out. Therefore it took but the briefest word now for the commander-in-chief to acquaint his officers with their part in the problem that confronted them.

It is from the extended accounts of Captain Berry of the *Vanguard* and Captain Miller of the *Theseus* that we know the details of this wonderful battle fought in the inky darkness of the night, in waters and among islands and headlands entirely unknown to every officer in the British fleet.

When the French first saw him, the enemy was nine or ten miles to the southward, with Aboukir

promontory and island and a network of dangerous shoals and reefs lying between. The keen eye of Nelson saw the weak point in the enemy's position; he noted that where there was room for a French ship to swing, there was also room for a British ship to anchor. By taking up positions inside as well as outside of the French line, he could concentrate his fire on the van and center of the enemy, while the wind would prevent the rear of the French from coming to the assistance of their consorts.

Circling around Aboukir point, and giving the shoals a safe berth, the British ships advanced upon the enemy in a single column. First came the *Goliath,* followed in order by the *Zealous,* the *Orion,* the *Audacious,* and the *Theseus.* The *Vanguard,* Nelson's flag-ship, was sixth in line. A few minutes before sunset the *Goliath* and the *Zealous* opened up with their heaviest guns, and ten minutes later Nelson gave the signal to engage the enemy at short range.

Advancing with silent guns, the British ships could be seen to have many sailors aloft who were furling sails and hauling in braces, preparatory to casting anchor. As they swung in to take their positions, the concentrated fire of the French broadsides was projected into their bows. Then with swift movement and masterly daring the *Goliath* and the *Zealous* worked around the

enemy's flank. Although deluged by his fierce, raking fire, they passed inside his line. A moment later the inshore side was taken by the *Orion,* the *Theseus,* and the *Audacious,* while the *Vanguard* and four other vessels pitched into the French front and center on the outside.

Considering that they had been thus cleverly subjected to two fires, the French fought with admirable courage. The *Theseus* and the *Guerrier* engaged in almost a grapple, not six feet apart. The guns of the former, loaded with two and three round-shot, belched their flame and hot lead directly into her adversary. In the twinkle of an eye the mizzen masts of the British ship fell by the board, her foremast having gone before. A little way off, twenty minutes later, the *Conquérant* and the *Spartiate,* both French, were also dismasted.

In the very face of success, Nelson was struck down. A bullet had hit him in the forehead, blinding him completely for the moment. Quickly he was carried below in the arms of Captain Berry, and a surgeon summoned. After his wound had been dressed, and while he was still suffering intensely, he groped for a pen and paper and scrawled the first words of his dispatch to St. Vincent announcing the victory.

### THE VICTORY OF TRAFALGAR

FOLLOWING the events recorded, Nelson had gained a brilliant victory at Copenhagen, had been raised to the rank of viscount, and in October, 1801, took his seat in the House of Lords. About the same time cessation of hostilities with the French republic was announced, and the following March a treaty of peace was signed.

Just a little over a year later—in May, 1803,—war with France broke out afresh. Nelson was appointed commander-in-chief of the King's ships in the Mediterranean. On the 18th he hoisted his flag on board the *Victory,* the ship whose name was to become almost as immortal as his own as the one in which he fought his last battle and won the crowning triumph of his life.

Meanwhile at Toulon and Brest the French navy was being daily increased and put into effective condition. New ships were equipped, troops gathered for embarkation; every preparation was being made for a fresh naval expedition of large proportions—none less than the invasion of England. For this purpose Napoleon had been drilling an army of one hundred and fifty

thousand men, and collecting a fleet of thirty-five ships. The squadrons were to assemble at the West Indies, and from there sail for the Straits of Dover.

Cognizant of the assembling of the squadron at Toulon, Lord Nelson joined Sir Richard Bickerton, and on the 8th of July began the blockade of that port. It was the most tedious kind of work, this effort to keep the French vessels within from getting out, and keeping those from without getting in. But through fair weather and foul, calms, winds, squalls and gales, the blockading was faithfully carried on, although only four of his ships were strictly seaworthy craft. Nelson's sagacity showed him the importance of preventing the junction of the French squadrons, and he made up his mind to maintain his vigil if it should take the balance of his life. If the French ships did attempt to break through him there at Toulon he would give them battle.

This is exactly what the French presently undertook to do. After being bottled up by the British for fully a year and a half, their fleet, under Admiral Villeneuve, slipped quietly out of Toulon harbor on the night of the 17th of January, bound for Sardinia.

Nelson's two lookout frigates signaled him of the enemy's act two days later. Within three

hours Nelson was at sea in hot pursuit. He scoured the Mediterranean in the worst weather he had ever seen; gale after gale tossed his ships over the angry waters. It seemed that the storms never would abate.

Now it happened that the same ill weather that tormented Nelson, and added to the perplexities of the pursuit, created havoc with many vessels of the pursued. So battered did they become, that Villeneuve was driven to return to the port he had just quitted, in order to repair them. When the craft had all been refitted, Villeneuve again set sail.

Meanwhile Nelson, unaware of the enemy's procedure, had been battling and drifting with the storms. He had been to Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia; to Alexandria, Candia, and Malta; he had "covered the channel from Barbary to Toro with frigates and the fleet." Yet—of course—he saw nothing of the French fleet.

It was deeply mortifying to Nelson to be thus outwitted; he smarted immeasurably under the humiliation. He made up his mind, finally, to go out of the Mediterranean, working westward. Storms and unfavorable winds continued to dog him. In his diary at this time we find he has written: "My good fortune seems flown away; I cannot get a fair wind. Dead foul!—dead foul!"

Through the Straits, through the Gut, past Cape St. Vincent, then straight across the Atlantic to the West Indies, the British fleet struggled on. With Nelson at the head there was no such thing as giving up. Then came the Barbadoes and fresh rumors that the French fleet had been seen in the Caribbean waters. On he plowed to Tobago, to Trinidad, to Montserrat, to Antigua.

Had the enemy been at the latter place? Yes; but he had gone. Once more he had slipped through Nelson's fingers. He grimaced, thought of his long and similar chase after Bonaparte, of its successful outcome, and—kept doggedly on.

Following rumors as to the direction taken by the French, he now turned about and headed across the Atlantic toward Cadiz. On the 18th of July, three months after he had left the Strait of Gibraltar and had covered nearly seven thousand miles of sea, he sighted Cape Spartel. But there was no French fleet. Two days later he reached Cadiz, and went on shore for the first time in two years.

A few days following he heard that the enemy had been seen steering northward. In that direction he went. But it was only to find nothing. Receiving orders to return to England, he sailed for Spithead.

His stay was short. Two weeks after his ar-

rival he sailed from Portsmouth to Cadiz, where he joined Vice-Admiral Collingwood. The force under his command then counted twenty-seven warships. In the harbor were the combined fleets of France and Spain under the command of Villeneuve and Gravina. Villeneuve at last! With the enemy were thirty-six warships and a number of frigates, apparently all ready for sea.

On the morning of the 19th of October, Nelson was cruising off Cape Trafalgar, keenly alert to any movement of the enemy. It was a clear day, with an easterly wind. All at once the signal flew up on the British lookout ships that the French were coming out of port. Seeing this, Nelson ran up the signal for a "general chase." The effort was to prevent the enemy from entering the Mediterranean. Toward the Strait of Gibraltar went the British ships, tearing along under full sail.

Two days later—at dawn of Monday, October 21st—the whole French and Spanish fleets had put to sea and were formed in a curved line of battle, stretching five miles from tip to tip, off the southern coast of Spain. On one side lay Cadiz; on the other, Cape Trafalgar; in the far distance was the Strait of Gibraltar, through which the British were bound the enemy should not escape. Evidently he had determined the only alternative left for him now was to fight it out.

Towering high among the craft of the Allies was the great Spanish ship, *Santissima Trinidad,* the largest vessel afloat and carrying one hundred and twenty-six heavy guns—a ship we have met before. Directly next to her rose the masts of the *Bucentaure,* the famous flagship of the commander-in-chief, Admiral Villeneuve. On either side of these Spanish and French leader-craft stretched the extensive wing of their consort, bristling with guns, ready for the conflict.

For Nelson the moment sought for two years and four months had at last arrived. Appearing on deck of the *Victory,* dressed in his admiral's coat, and covered with a blaze of decorations which were the pride of his heart, he made in quick succession the signals: "Form the order for sailing," "Prepare for battle," "Bear up."

Beating round, the British now came forward in two columns to the attack. Admiral Collingwood, in his flagship, the *Royal Sovereign,* headed the column to the south, while the *Victory* led the northern ships.

Toward eleven o'clock Nelson went below, and on his knees wrote the words of his noble prayer: "May the great God whom I worship grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory. . . . Amen." He followed this almost immediately afterward with the memorable message which was the last

to his fleet, "England expects every man will do his duty." Shouts and cheers along the whole line greeted the inspiring words.

Directing her guns full upon the Spanish line, the *Royal Sovereign* began firing as soon as she was within range. At the same time the *Victory* swept down upon the *Bucentaure,* on the French wing. As Nelson drew nearer the whole artillery of the French van was directed upon him in a staggering violence. Then he opened up on the *Bucentaure* with such a terrific retaliatory fire that twenty of her guns were speedily dismounted and four hundred of her men killed or wounded.

Leaving the French flagship to his consorts, Nelson now turned his attention to the *Redoubtable,* which had already been attacking him. Running up close to the second French ship, he ordered the guns on that side to be fired. As they spat out their flame and shot, the *Redoubtable* shivered, for the range was so close that the guns of both vessels were almost touching.

Nelson and Captain Hardy paced the quarter-deck of the *Victory.* With satisfaction both noted the effectiveness of the British fire. Almost above them, fifty feet up, the mizzentop of the rival craft swarmed with the best of France's sharpshooters. They had been told by their commander to "bring down Nelson—the officer with the medals" if ever the chance presented itself.

Now that opportunity was theirs. There he stood below them in clear, unobstructed view, hidden only at moments by the shifting clouds of battle smoke. A number of French muskets were quickly raised in the enemy mizzentop. The muzzles were trained downward at the calm and unconcerned one-armed admiral.

Just then a number of his men noted his peril —saw the Frenchmen aloft—saw their deadly intent. A warning cry was raised, and a number of British bullets sped upward, and found marks. But it was too late. As Nelson wheeled about several of the French sharpshooters' guns cracked, and Nelson, shot through the back, fell to the deck.

Captain Hardy was quickly stooping over him. "They have done for me at last;" gasped the great admiral, "my backbone is shot through!"

He was carried below to the cockpit, among the wounded and the dying, where everything was done to relieve his suffering. There for three hours he lay, listening intently to the incessant strife going on overhead in an effort to detect which way the battle seemed to be going, while his own life moments ticked rapidly away to the zenith of the dial. Of attendants and wounded alike, as they appeared, he asked weakly, "Are we still winning?"

Before he lapsed into unconsciousness he knew

that the *Bucentaure* had been taken; that while his flag was still flying seventeen of the French and Spanish ships had been captured, and one of the most glorious of British sea victories had been virtually won. Even as he was closing his eyes for the last time, the roaring guns fell into peaceful silence, and everything was hushed and quiet when he whispered his final words, "Thank God, I have done my duty!"

## V

## THE BURNING OF THE "PHILADELPHIA"

'Twere better thus to sink where it stood
The ship he loved than that it should
Be used by foe against the good
  Of his countrymen.
  Swift stroke of oar—then
Flames on the ship shot to'rd the sky,
And when the pirates saw the why
They raged with mad, defeated cry.

—*Curtis.*

SCENE OF THE "PHILADELPHIA" EXPLOIT

## The Burning of the *Philadelphia*

For us of to-day it is very difficult to conceive that there ever was a time when the United States paid money to another country to be left unmolested. It is even more difficult for us to imagine the United States paying such a tribute to *pirates*.

And yet this is exactly what America did once upon a time. Moreover those same pirates,—the sea-robbers of the Barbary coast states of Morocco, Tunis, Tripoli, and Algiers, lying along the northern coast of Africa—had succeeded by their indiscriminate and destructive raids on commerce in forcing most of the civilized powers of Europe to bend to their demands for a tribute in order to be left alone. Even then peace did not come. These disreputable corsairs of the seas,—like the bully who takes the small boy's marbles from him in agreement of friendliness and then turns with cuffs and blows to demand more treasure—boldly continued to prey on Mediterranean merchantmen, to slyly deny their misdeeds, and to offer generous new assurances that all would be well in case a little more tribute were offered.

The only excuse that America can offer for ever entering into a shameful bargain of this kind, and maintaining it as long as she did, is that "everybody else was doing it." For this purpose Congress appropriated money, and treaties were made by the President and ratified by the Senate. On one occasion, at least, Congress actually revoked the order for new ships for the navy, and took the money to again buy off those pests of the seas, the Barbary bucaneers. The fund for this disgraceful purpose was known as the "Mediterranean Fund," and was entrusted to the Secretary of State to be disbursed by him at his own discretion.

Thus matters went on for some years. But the time was soon to come when a summary stop was to be put upon the blackmailing—at least for this country. After the United States had its brush with France in 1798, and following Truxtun's brilliant victory over the French frigate *L'Insurgente* in the next year, it occurred to the American government that perhaps there was a more efficient and more manly way of dealing with the Barbary powers than feebly handing thousands of dollars over to them every time they took a notion to demand it.

This change of attitude was largely occasioned by a number of complaints which came in about

this time from the blackmailers themselves. I think you can guess pretty well as to the nature of these grievances. The Pasha of Tripoli whined that we had given more money to some of the Algerian ministers than to him; the Algiers government grumbled that we should not pay Tripoli so much; Morocco and Tunis pleaded for better treatment. With nations as with individuals, when the payment of black-mail is once begun there is no end to it. In the present instance the situation was made even more acute by the declaration of the Pasha of Tripoli that he had ordered his subjects to cut down the flagstaff in front of the residence of the American consul, and was about to declare war against us. This meant a renewed onslaught against our merchantmen by his pirates unless we immediately stepped forth with sufficient gifts to buy the old rascal off.

In answer the United States government did a most fitting thing. In 1801 Congress sent Commodore Dale with a small squadron of warships to teach the pirates a much-needed lesson.

No sooner had the expedition reached the Mediterranean than the cowardly Morocco and Tunis stopped their grumbling and came to terms with the United States. This left Tripoli alone to be dealt with.

As Commodore Dale had sailed before the

declaration of war with Tripoli was known, he was hampered by his orders, which permitted him to protect our commerce only, and which forbade hostilities. Nevertheless he was destined to get into a fight, for hardly had he appeared off Tripoli than he was fired upon by the Tripolitan ship *Tripoli,* of fourteen guns. No self-respecting, peacefully-inclined American would ever stand that, and Dale's own guns were quickly barking away in defense.

The engagement lasted a matter of three hours. Then the *Tripoli,* having suffered sufficiently for her temerity, struck her colors. Her mizzenmast was gone, she was riddled with the well-aimed shot of the Americans, and fifty of her crew lay wounded or dead. Scarcely any Americans on the *Enterprise*—the twelve-gun ship commanded by Lieutenant Sterret which had fought this battle—had been wounded. It was a signal victory. As he had no orders to make captures, Sterret threw all the guns and ammunition of the *Tripoli* overboard, cut away her remaining masts, and left her with only one spar and a single jury sail to drift back to Tripoli—a hint to the Pasha of the new American policy.

In 1803 the command of the United States fleet in the Mediterranean was taken over by Commodore Preble, who had just succeeded in forcing satisfaction from Morocco for an attack made

upon his country's merchantmen by a vessel from Tangier. He was preparing to enforce a blockade of Tripoli when news reached him that the frigate *Philadelphia,* of forty-four guns, commanded by Captain Bainbridge, and one of the best ships in the United States navy, had gone upon a reef in the harbor of Tripoli. It was said that the mishap occurred while she was pursuing an enemy, and that while she lay helpless she had been surrounded and captured by Tripolitan gunboats.

This was a very serious blow. It not only weakened the American force in those waters, but it was also a great help to the enemy, for it promised to add another vessel to their own fleet. In fact they got the *Philadelphia* off the rocks, towed her into the harbor, and anchored her close under the guns of their forts. They also replaced her batteries, and made every effort to prepare her for service against her own ships.

At this critical time Stephen Decatur came upon the scene to save the day for his countrymen. Decatur, a young lieutenant of the *Enterprise,* appeared before Commodore Preble and offered to go into the harbor and destroy the *Philadelphia.*

Preble was willing, after talking at length with the intrepid young man and hearing his plans in detail. But some delay ensued in carrying out

the program, as the squadron was driven off the coast by severe gales. However, in January, 1804, the favorable moment having apparently arrived, the Commodore assigned to Decatur a small vessel known as a "ketch" which had recently been captured from the enemy.

Decatur took seventy men from the *Enterprise* and put them on the *Intrepid,* as he now chose to rechristen the prize. Then, accompanied by Lieutenant Stewart in the *Siren,* who was to support him, he set sail for Tripoli. The little ketch proved very cramped quarters for so many men, but they were used to discomforts in those days, and finally reached their destination without mishap.

For almost a week they were unable to approach the harbor, owing to severe gales which threatened the loss of their vessels, and ran into a hidden bay for protection. But the weather moderated, and on February 16th they stole out in the darkness of the night and made their way into the harbor.

All this time the *Philadelphia,* with forty guns mounted, double-shotted and ready for firing, and manned by a full complement of the pirates, was moored within half-gunshot of the Pasha's castle, the mole and crown batteries, and within easy range of ten other batteries which mounted a total of over a hundred guns. Some Tripolitan

cruisers, two galleys, and nineteen gunboats also lay between the *Philadelphia* and the shore.

Leaving the *Siren* behind, into the midst of this powerful armament of the enemy Decatur had to go with his little vessel and only four guns. But he was undismayed. By seven o'clock he was stealthily making his way between the reefs and shoals which formed the mouth of the harbor. With the aid of a light wind blowing inshore the ketch bowled silently along. Her master steered straight toward the *Philadelphia*, whose position he well knew and whose lights he could soon make out, like burning embers against the dark heart of night. By nine-thirty he was within two hundred yards of the former American frigate.

As they approached Decatur stood at the helm with the pilot, only two or three men showing on deck. The rest of the crew of seventy-five were lying hidden under the bulwarks. In this manner the *Intrepid* drifted to within twenty-five yards of the *Philadelphia* before she was hailed by the lookouts. The cry was in a foreign tongue whose meaning the young American could only guess at. He answered back in English, hoping that it would be understood; "This is the *Intrepid.*"

"You Angleesh?" came the broken inquiry through the darkness.

"We are alone," said Decatur, as though he had either not heard or had misunderstood the question. "We are in need of aid."

"What wrong?" was the next call. Evidently the pirate's suspicions, if he had any, were allayed, as Decatur intended they should be.

"Our anchors have been lost in the gale," was the truthful answer. (The *Intrepid* and *Siren* had each lost an anchor.) "Will you let us run a warp to your ship and ride by her till morning?"

The truth of the matter is, while this little by-play had been going on, some of Decatur's men had already lowered a small boat with the avowed purpose of rowing to the *Philadelphia* whether a favorable or an unfavorable answer resulted. A reply that sounded very much like "You come" came from the captured frigate. Instantly Decatur leaped into the small boat with a rope, followed by a couple of his men. In a few minutes they had pulled to the big shadowy hull of the *Philadelphia* and made fast their line to her forechains. He then twitched the rope sharply three times, a pre-arranged signal, and at once his crew on the ketch began to haul the latter toward the pirate craft.

At this juncture the suspicions of the Tripolitans seemed suddenly awakened. There came a harsh, alarmed cry of "Americanos!" and the

strangers were ordered away in no uncertain terms of pidgin-English.

But those buccaneers knew not with whom they were reckoning. At the first sign of alarm on the part of the enemy, Decatur sprang up the main chains of the *Philadelphia,* shouting to his men to board her at once. He was rapidly followed by his officers and crew.

As the Americans swarmed over the rails and came upon the deck the pirates gathered in a panic-stricken, confused mass on the forecastle. Apparently they thought themselves assailed by an opponent many times more numerous than themselves, whereas, in truth, the odds were all on their own side had they but known it.

Decatur waited a moment until his men were all behind him. Then, placing himself at their head, he drew his sword and rushed upon the Tripolitans. There was a sharp, but very brief conflict. The pirates, terrorized from the beginning, stood before the fierce onslaught only long enough to see scores of their number go down under the unerring pistol-shots and cutlass-thrusts of the Americans, and then those of them who could fled to the rails and jumped madly overboard.

Could he have done so it would have been the immediate effort of Decatur now to take the *Philadelphia* out of the harbor. But this he knew to

be impossible. He therefore gave orders to burn the ship, and his men, who had been thoroughly instructed in their parts, dispersed to all sections of the vessel with the combustibles that had been prepared. So well and quickly did they work, a few minutes later flames broke out in practically all parts of the frigate at once.

Satisfied that he could do no more, Decatur ordered his men to return to the *Intrepid.* Quietly, without confusion, they obeyed, although there was a pang in the throat of many a man of them because the dear old Yankee frigate must perish in this ignoble manner.

It was a moment of unusual peril. The fire was breaking out all along the *Philadelphia,* and the flaming brands and sparks were already beginning to fly. Should any of these fall onto the deck of the little *Intrepid,* lying by, she too would be afire in a moment, with great danger of her powder magazine catching and blowing her to fragments.

The Americans were quickly aboard their own craft, however. The next instant they had slashed the cables, manned the sweeps, and were bearing away from the larger ship.

It was a magnificent sight to see those great licking tongues of pallid red bursting forth from the hull and decking of the *Philadelphia,* as the ketch swiftly drew farther and farther away,

afraid that in the bright and expansive reflection of the conflagration the enemy on shore could detect them and shoot them down before they could get out of range.

Soon the tongues of fire were creeping up the tall masts of the frigate, and clutching first one shivering shroud and then another in their consuming tentacles. As the ship's guns became heated, they were discharged, as if by phantom gunners, shattering the silence of the night into quivering echoes. And, as if in a final effort to wreak vengeance on the foreigners who had brought her to this, the grand old frigate now let go her shoreward batteries, and the heavy shot went hurtling into the midst of pirate craft and shoreworks. Finally her cables parted, and, an awesome pyre of wreckage, she drifted across the harbor, to finally blow up.

Meantime the waters in the vicinity had been illuminated almost like day. The escaping *Intrepid* stood out against the light background like a blot of ink on a white sheet of paper. An angry roar went up from the buccaneer populace of Tripoli. Shore guns and ship's guns began to cast their venomous hate toward the frail craft of the fleeing ones. But fortune favored the Americans; they kept on pulling for dear life, a friendly puff of wind soon filled their sail, and soon they were out of range and once more en-

gulfed in darkness. A little later they came up with the *Siren,* and bore away to rejoin Commodore Preble.

This successful venture was carried through solely by the cool courage of Stephen Decatur and the admirable discipline of his men. The hazard was very great; everything had depended on the nerve with which the attack was made and the completeness of the surprise. Nothing miscarried; no success could have been more complete. Lord Nelson—at that time in the Mediterranean, and the best judge of a naval exploit that ever lived—pronounced it "the most bold and daring act of the age." In any event, it is one of those feats of arms which no American should ever forget, for although of no great importance, it fittingly illustrates the keen resourcefulness and high courage of American seamen.

## VI

## PERRY'S VICTORY ON LAKE ERIE

They fought like tigers on that deck
Till ship was shatter'd and a wreck;
But as she sank in splendor to her grave
The brave old flag did still wave
From her last boat, speeding well,
'Midst burning shot and shrieking shell,
And fearless sailors pulled at oar
Till flag adorned a ship once more.

—*Atherton.*

SCENE OF THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

## Perry's Victory on Lake Erie

BECAUSE disagreement broke out between the United States and Great Britain relative to the latter country's right to search American vessels and seize British naval deserters who had voluntarily enlisted in the merchant marine of America, war was declared on the 18th of June, 1812, by the newer country.

Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, a native of Rhode Island, and twenty-seven years old, had assumed command of Lake Erie and the other upper Great Lakes. In the very beginning this was rather a nominal command, for Lake Erie, the most important waterway of the lot at the time, was in exclusive control of the foe. But the Americans had captured a British brig called the *Caledonia,* and purchased three schooners which were afterward named the *Somers,* the *Tigress,* and the *Ohio,* also a sloop, the *Trippe.* For a time these were blockaded in the Niagara River, only to be released after the fall of Fort George and the retreat of the English forces.

Only by the hardest labor was Commodore Perry able to tack these ships up against the current to Presque Isle (now called Erie), where

two twenty-gun brigs were being constructed under his directions. Three schooners—the *Ariel,* the *Scorpion,* and the *Porcupine*—were also built.

The harbor of Erie was well-protected and spacious, and a most excellent place for Perry's indefatigable efforts at building up a small fleet with which to chase the enemy off the waters under his direction. But it possessed one feature which, while an aid in the way of keeping the British from getting in, now turned into a disadvantage to the Americans in the way of keeping them from getting out. This was an extensive sandbar across the harbor's mouth. At times the storms shifted this into such proportions that vessels of deep draught could not pass over it; at other times the waters wore it down so the passage could be made quite readily. Just now it was a dangerous, if not an impossible, obstacle.

While Perry was busy trying to devise some method to circumvent the sandbar, Captain Robert Barclay, commander of the British forces on the lake, appeared off the harbor and proceeded to make matters additionally tight for the Americans by instituting a blockade. This the enemy maintained till August 2nd, 1812, when their ships disappeared.

Anticipating an early return of the foe, Perry

made hasty preparations for escape. On the 4th, at two o'clock, one American brig, the *Lawrence,* was towed to that point of the bar where the water was deepest. Her guns had been dismounted and placed on the beach, to make her as light as possible. It was proposed to get the ship over by what is termed a "camel." This is how Commodore Perry himself, in a report, describes the procedure:

"Two large scows, prepared for the purpose, were hauled alongside, and the work of lifting the brig proceeded as fast as possible. Pieces of massive timber had been run through the forward and after ports, and when the scows were sunk to the water's edge the ends of the timbers were blocked up, supported by these floating foundations. The plugs were now put in the scows, and the water was pumped out of them. By this process the brig was lifted quite two feet, though when she was got on the bar it was found that she still drew too much water. It became necessary, in consequence, to cover up everything, sink the scows anew, and block up the timbers afresh. This duty occupied the whole night."

Barely had the *Lawrence* passed the bar, at eight o'clock the next morning, than the enemy suddenly appeared. But the British were too

late. Captain Barclay exchanged a few shots with the American craft, and then withdrew.

The *Niagara* was the next ship to cross the bar, then the others followed in succession. There were not enough men to man the vessels at first, but a draft contingent arrived from Ontario, and many frontiersmen volunteered, while soldiers were also sent on board.

On the 18th the squadron sailed in quest of the enemy. After cruising about some time, the *Ohio* was sent down the lake. The other ships went into Put-in Bay.

Captain Barclay, who had been at Amherstburg, found that he was very short of provisions. Up to this time he had not cared to risk an engagement with the Americans, but now he felt compelled to do so. Therefore, he prepared his vessels for action, and put out of Amherstburg on the 9th of September.

It was the next day that his squadron was discovered from the masthead of the *Lawrence,* just as the first streaks of dawn were appearing. The British were then coming up from the northwest. At once Perry's ships were all hustle and bustle, as it was realized that an engagement with the foe was almost sure to result. The light breeze that was blowing shifted to the northeast, thus giving the Americans the weather-gage.

In the meantime, Captain Barclay lay-to in a

close column, heading toward the southwest. His ships, six in number, consisted of two men-of-war, two schooners, a brig and a sloop. These were named respectively, and armed, thus: the *Detroit,* nineteen guns; the *Queen Charlotte,* seventeen guns; the *Lady Prevost,* thirteen guns; the *Hunter,* ten guns; the *Chippeway,* one gun; the *Little Belt,* three guns.

The American squadron, consisting of nine vessels, was made up of the brigs *Lawrence, Niagara,* and *Caledonia;* the schooners *Ariel, Scorpion, Somers, Porcupine,* and *Tigress;* and the sloop *Trippe.* Their armament stood: *Lawrence,* twenty guns; *Niagara,* twenty guns; *Caledonia,* three guns; *Ariel,* four guns; *Scorpion,* two guns; *Somers,* two guns; *Porcupine, Tigress, Trippe,* each one gun.

In addition to having more ships than the enemy, the Americans had close to double armament strength, possessing less guns but guns of greater range. Against this advantage, the British had an excess of perhaps fifty men in fighting trim. Therefore, it will be seen that if Commodore Perry had not come out a victor in the forthcoming battle, it would have been a national disgrace. It is true that his men fought with a wonderful gallantry, but so did the men of Captain Barclay.

As the American squadron approached the

foe, Perry's straggling line (the ships did not seem to keep well together) formed an angle of about fifteen degrees with the more compact line of the British.

It was eleven twenty-five when the *Detroit* opened up the action by a shot from her long twenty-four, which fell short. Ten minutes later she fired a second time. This was better directed, and went crashing through the *Lawrence.* Almost immediately the *Scorpion* retaliated with her long thirty-two, but missed. The *Lawrence* shifted her port bow-chaser, and now opened up herself with her long twelves, followed by her carronades, but the shot from the latter all fell short.

The action now became general, although the rearmost American vessels were almost beyond range of their own guns, and quite out of reach of the guns of their antagonists. The ships in the van, however, were enough in numbers to match the enemy and keep him busy.

Meantime the *Lawrence,* crippled considerably by the shot that had struck her, bore down slowly upon the enemy. It was twenty minutes before she succeeded in getting near enough to use her shorter range guns—the carronades. As she had approached she seemed to be the universal target for the foe, who directed their fire at her with gusto. Suffering a good deal, she was now able

to use effectively all of her own armament. Her shots went into the ranks of the British line with telling vigor and accuracy, so much so, in fact, that the British speedily showed more or less distress.

Helping the *Lawrence* were the *Scorpion* and the *Ariel.* These three American ships, throwing a combined weight of one hundred and four pounds, were pitted against the *Chippeway* and *Detroit,* throwing one hundred and twenty-three pounds at a broadside. At the same time the *Caledonia,* the *Niagara,* and the *Somers* were engaging at long range the *Hunter* and the *Queen Charlotte,* while, also at long range, the remaining American craft were engaging the *Prevost* and the *Little Belt.*

By twelve-thirty the *Lawrence* had worked in to close quarters, and action was going on with the greatest fury between her and her antagonists within canister range. Through ignorance, the raw and inexperienced American gunners committed the same error that the British so often fell into on the ocean during the war—they overloaded their carronades. In consequence, the carronade of the *Scorpion* kicked from its mountings in the middle of the action, and went tumbling down the hatchway, while its shot scattered harmlessly against the hull of the *Detroit.* One of the *Ariel's* long twelves was also put out of commission by bursting.

During this time Captain Barclay's crew on the *Detroit* fought with excellent skill and bravery. Their aim was good, although the ship's equipment was so deficient that they actually had to discharge their pieces by firing pistols at the touchholes, being without slowmatches.

Meanwhile the *Caledonia* came up into better range; but the *Niagara* signified no such intention, her commander, Captain Elliott, handling her wretchedly for the good of his compatriots, and keeping at a distance which prevented the effective use of his carronades on either his special antagonist, the *Queen Charlotte*, or the latter's sister ships. Yet he had managed thus far to use his long guns well enough to cause the *Queen Charlotte* some damage, among which was the loss of her gallant commander, Captain Finnis, and Mr. Stokes, her first-lieutenant. The command had been taken over by Provincial-Lieutenant Irvine who, perceiving that he could accomplish nothing in his present position, left off engagement with the diffident *Niagara*, passed the *Hunter*, and joined the attack on the *Lawrence* at close quarters. Thus was the *Niagara*, the best-manned of the American vessels, kept out of action by her captain's misconduct.

At the end of the line, the fight went on at long range between the *Somers*, the *Tigress*, the *Porcupine*, and the *Trippe*, on the American side;

and the *Lady Prevost* and the *Little Belt,* on the British side. Considering her short-range equipment the *Lady Prevost* put up a remarkably stout and admirable defense against the long guns of her American adversaries. Before long she was necessarily greatly shot up; her commander, Lieutenant Buchan, had been dangerously wounded, and her acting first-lieutenant, Mr. Roulette, had also been seriously hurt. She began falling gradually to leeward.

At the head of the line the fighting was fierce and bloody to an extraordinary degree. By now the *Lawrence, Scorpion, Ariel,* and *Caledonia* were opposed to the *Detroit,* the *Chippeway,* the *Queen Charlotte,* and the *Hunter.* Lying at very close quarters, the ships of both sides did great destruction to their opponents, and their crews performed with a rare courage. Altogether it seemed quite an equal contest, the Americans being superior in weight of broadside metal, but inferior in men. However, the *Lawrence* had received such damage in coming into the fight, that weighing her condition, the odds were somewhat against Commodore Perry.

As the men fought on, the heaviest fire on each side seemed to be concentrated upon the larger opposite vessels. In consequence the *Queen Charlotte* was now almost disabled, and the *Detroit* was battered and cut up in a fashion to

greatly distress her. Indeed, her first-lieutenant had fallen, mortally stricken, while Captain Barclay was so severely injured that he had to be carried from the deck, leaving the command to Lieutenant Inglis.

But if matters had gone ill with the *Detroit,* on board the *Lawrence* affairs were even worse. Her decks showed evidence of the grimest sort of carnage. Out of one hundred and three men only nineteen remained unwounded. In her ward-room, used as a cockpit, and mostly above water, many of the wounded, in the hands of surgeons, were killed outright by random shots of the enemy which came hurtling through the thin wooden walls. Her first-lieutenant, Mr. Yarnall, was three times wounded, but kept the deck through all; the only other lieutenant on board, Mr. Brooks, was mortally wounded. Every brace was shot away; only one usable mast remained; her hull was a gaping sieve above the waterline; by degrees her guns on the engaged side had been all dismounted.

Perry, however, kept up the fight with praiseworthy zeal and unexampled bravery. As his crew on the *Lawrence* fell one by one, he called down through the skylight for a surgeon's assistant; and this call was repeated and obeyed till no more assistants were able to answer. Then he shouted into the ward-room: "Can any of

the wounded pull a rope?" and three or four of them crawled up on deck to lend a feeble hand in placing the last guns.

It was the Commodore himself who, assisted by the purser and chaplain, aimed and fired the final shot. With steady hand and the utmost coolness he sent his charge whistling toward the *Detroit*, and had the satisfaction of seeing a portion of her rail and foremast go flying into splinters.

Most commanders now would have struck their colors and permitted the enemy to take the crew prisoners. But not so Perry. Instead, the Commodore leaped into a rowboat with his brother and four seamen, taking his flag with him. Whatever happened, he had made up his mind that the British should never have a chance to gloat over *this* emblem,—to handle its folds, and say when they got back to England, "This is one of the flags we took from the impertinent Americans."

A quarter of a mile to windward Perry's searching eye had already noted the *Niagara*—the *Niagara,* fresh, strong, still able to put up a good fight. Now, standing proudly in the stern of the small boat, bareheaded, with the beloved flag flying defiantly from the bow, he ordered his men to pull hard for the *Niagara.*

It was two-thirty when Perry arrived safely on

board the *Niagara*. To this he transferred his flag, took command, and sent its former commander, Elliott, back in the rowboat to order up the three schooners. Within fifteen minutes the latter had come up, and Perry bore down to break Captain Barclay's line.

The British ships had fought themselves to a standstill. The *Lady Prevost* was crippled and sagged to leeward, though ahead of the others. The *Detroit* and the *Queen Charlotte* were so disabled that they could not offer resistance against fresh combatants.

As the *Niagara* stood down, firing her port guns into the *Chippeway,* the *Little Belt,* and the *Lady Prevost,* and her starboard guns into the *Detroit,* the *Queen Charlotte,* and the *Hunter,* she had everything her own way. Raked terribly by her fire, the *Detroit* and the *Charlotte* tried to move off, but ran afoul of one another with their rigging shot to shreds.

Then the *Niagara* luffed smartly athwart their bows, within half pistol-shot, maintaining a terrific discharge of great guns and musketry. On the other side the British tangled ships were almost as disastrously swept by the *Caledonia* and the schooners, which were so close that some of their grape-shot, passing over the foe, rattled against Perry's spars and braces.

Caught as he was between two fires, there was

nothing for Captain Barclay to do but strike his colors, which he did at three o'clock. The *Chippeway* and the *Little Belt,* seeing the *Detroit* fall, did their best to escape, but were overtaken and brought to respectively by the *Trippe* and the *Scorpion.* The commander of the latter, Captain Stephen Champlin, fired the last shot, as he did the first, of the battle.

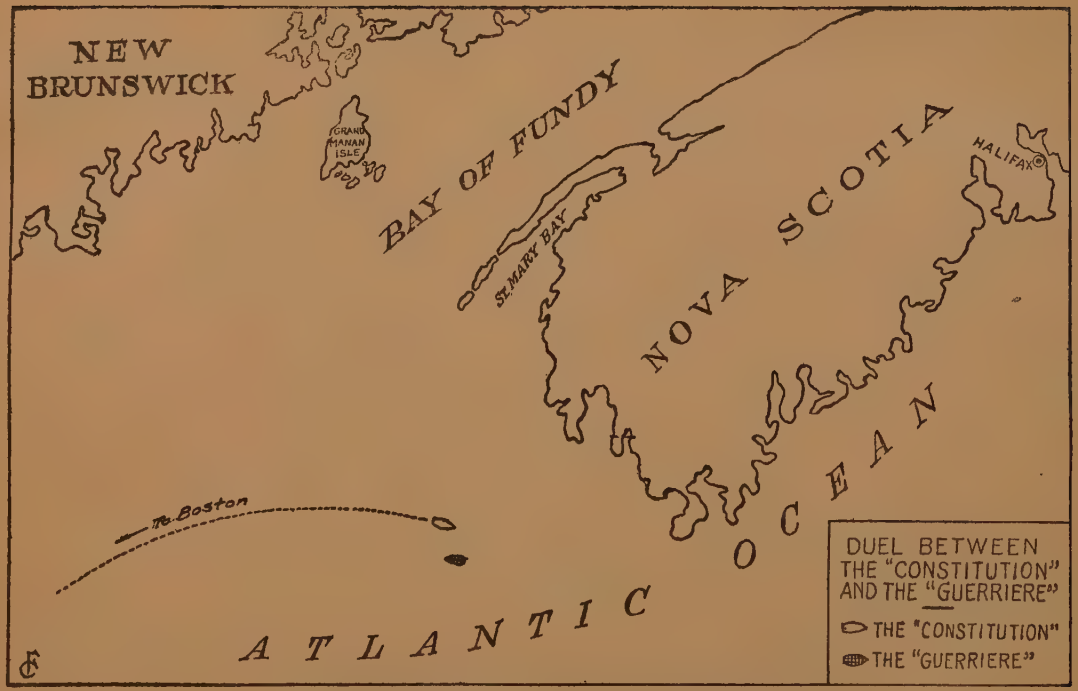
In its material results, as well as in its moral effects, Perry's victory on Lake Erie was most important. It gave the Americans complete command of all the upper Great Lakes, and prevented continued fears of invasion from that quarter. It also gave the British a greater respect for American naval ability, and surely did much to increase self-confidence in the nation.

## VII

## THE "CONSTITUTION" AND THE "GUERRIERE"

The queenly ship! brave hearts had striven
  And true ones died with her!
We saw her mighty cable riven
  Like floating gossamer;
We saw her proud flag struck that morn,
  A star once o'er the seas—
Her anchor gone, her deck uptorn—
  And sadder things than these!

—*Hemans.*




THE "CONSTITUTION" AND THE "GUERRIERE"

# The *Constitution* and the *Guerriere*

## AN EXCITING CHASE

THE first cruise of the United States navy in the War of 1812 was destined to be a disappointment to all concerned. Commodore Rodgers, sent out with six men-of-war on June 21, 1812, three days after the declaration of hostilities, finally had returned to Boston harbor, after a seventy-day fruitless hunt for the British Jamaica squadron, with one letter-of-marque, seven merchantmen, and one recaptured American ship. To add to the humiliation, an engagement had taken place with the British ship *Belvidera,* of thirty-six guns, and she had very adroitly slipped away.

After her lucky escape the *Belvidera* made her way to Halifax, the chief naval station of Great Britain on the American coast. Her report was the first news to reach the British of the declaration of war by America, for in those days news traveled slowly.

Thoroughly alarmed, the English were quick to act; and in a few days a squadron left Halifax in search of Commodore Rodgers. The force

thus hurriedly gathered was quite formidable. It consisted of: The *Africa,* sixty-four guns; the *Shannon,* thirty-eight; the *Guerriere,* thirty-eight; the *Belvidera,* thirty-six, and the *Æolus,* thirty-two. It was the intention of the squadron to chastise the headstrong Americans for their attempt to dispute with Great Britain her proud mastery of the seas.

During the early part of July this force made its appearance off New York, and quickly effected captures enough to convince the American merchantmen that a season in port was preferable to the dangers of trading on the ocean in war time. The squadron also overhauled the American brig *Nautilus,* thereby gaining the distinction of taking the first war-vessel of the war. But what the British ached for was to meet enemy craft of more importance than merchantmen and fourteen-gun brigs. Therefore, they must have been much pleased when, some days later, the United States frigate *Constitution* hove in sight under circumstances which seemed to promise her an easy prey for the five British warships.

It was on the 17th of July that the *Constitution,* after receiving a new crew at Annapolis, was standing northward under easy sail, bound for New York. Along about noon, the lookout reported four sails on the horizon; and one hour

later a fifth sail was seen bearing up a few points to the eastward.

A careful scrutiny of the strangers convinced Captain Isaac Hull, the valiant commander, then thirty-seven years old, that they were men-of-war, although their nationality could not be determined. Nor was he able to make out their identity when night fell; while they were closer, they seemed not to be approaching him directly. Uneasy, and bent upon knowing just whom they were before darkness prevented, Hull now set signals which put the question plainly. But although the distant ships must have seen and read these, they made no reply. Then the night closed in in earnest and they were blotted from view.

When day broke, to his chagrin Hull found himself fairly surrounded by British frigates. Not only were there the original five British men-of-war which had left Halifax, but there was the captured *Nautilus* with her guns turned against the representative of her own nation, and a captured American schooner which had likewise been pressed into service. Clearly the *Constitution* was outnumbered, and in a bad predicament. Captain Hull saw that the only way he could save her was to take to flight.

Flight it was then. The events of that three days' chase are told with great detail in the log-

book of the *Constitution.* To this record, many of the officers and crew have later added interesting and illuminating sidelights.

In referring to the early stages of the chase, British historians themselves freely admit that the *Constitution,* in taking advantage of the sudden lulls and gusts of the wind, showed far better seamanship and command than England's own vessels. Later on the frustrated foe called in all their small boats, and when the American frigate had vanished from view, went about for some days picking up such of her ships as had drifted widely apart.

To the delight of the jackies aboard the *Constitution,* the morning of the second day brought a light breeze over the ruffled waters which promised to hold. It really did keep fairly steady for a few hours, during which time she gained on her pursuers sufficiently to put her in the lead close to five miles. Then the breeze died out very tantalizingly, and the calm again held them in its grip, calling for the sweeps and small boats and kedge.

On the gun-deck, about the carriages of the great cannon which were now useless, lay such of the crew as were not assigned to duty in the boats or at the capstan. Wearied with the constant strain, they fell asleep as soon as relieved from active duty; although they knew that from

that slumber they might be awakened in the midst of yelling comrades, the clash of steel, and the roar of guns.

Ever alert for any sign of a coming breeze, Captain Hull presently saw on the water far to windward that rippling appearance that always betokens the presence of a coming puff. He determined to utilize this in such a way that the British themselves would gain nothing by it. Clouds, too, began to appear to windward, promising a squall of uncertain proportions, while in a short time sheets of gray, which the experienced sea-dog knows to be rain, could be seen driving toward them.

With the greatest ostentation, the *Constitution* was made ready as if she expected a severe gale. The enemy could see the nimble American jackies taking in sail and furling all the lighter canvas. They could also see the clouds and rain. There was no doubt about it; a bad squall was coming.

Immediately all was activity in the tops of the British frigates. Reefs were rapidly taken in the larger sails, some of which were even close-furled. Knowing the peril of being caught in a storm too close together, the British warships steered well apart; the course was forgotten in the effort of every shipmaster to meet the brunt of ill weather as best he could.

Before these preparations had been completed

the rain had reached the *Constitution,* and she became enveloped in a heavy shower which so hid her from view of the enemy that her outline was all but lost to the British. For this reason the foe was not aware that, in the midst of the deluge of rain, the American jackies were tearing around, rapidly taking out the reefs they had run a short time before, and shaking out the sail to almost full spread.

Then, with the uprising wind filling her canvas into beautiful arcs, the *Constitution* sprang forward like a hound after a rabbit, headed for Boston harbor, the seas dashing high against her sharp bow and at times wetting the fore deck.

After traveling thus through the storm, which lasted upwards of an hour, the thunder-clouds passed by, and with them went the rain to windward. But, to the joy of the American sailors, the wind still held good, and their ship continued to drive well.

As the gray curtain of rain swept farther and farther away, the eyes of the jackies followed it with increasing intentness and exultation. As more and more blue water was disclosed in the direction of the British, without showing a ship, many a man said to his neighbor with a chuckle, "Where are they?"

At last "they" appeared. So far were the British left behind that they were now practi-

cally out of the chase. Two of them were actually hull-down, while one was a mere speck against the horizon-line. Blanketed by the storm they had not seen their shrewd fugitives getting away; had made no effort to throw their furled sail until the squall had passed; and now they must have been immensely crestfallen at the trick played upon them so cleverly.

But though far behind, the foe must be given credit for not giving up the pursuit. They held valiantly after the American frigate, hoping against hope to yet overhaul her.

It was a fruitless effort. Instead of gaining on the *Constitution*—which was really a swifter craft—the British ships fell farther and farther behind. Finally they had all disappeared from view, and the American frigate continued on her way to Boston without mishap.

### AN UNEXPECTED MEETING

"You say her name is the *Guerriere?*"

"Yes; I have just recently been commissioned to her. She carries thirty-eight guns, and is as fast as a hound. A fine craft, Hull!"

"Mayhap she is, Dacres; but you may just watch out for that ship of yours if I ever catch her in the *Constitution!*"

Both speakers were dressed in the uniform of naval officers. One—the taller—wore the British insignia of a captain; the other, the markings of an American captain. The Englishman now laughed good-naturedly.

"If war should come, Hull, I hope two such friends as we may be spared the irony of meeting one another in conflict; but if so, I am willing to bet a hundred pounds sterling that your *Constitution* will strike her colors to my *Guerriere!* What say?"

"No," said Hull; "I'll bet no money on it, and could not use your English sterling anyhow. However, I will stake you a hat on the outcome in favor of the *Constitution.*"

"Done!" responded Dacres promptly; and the bet was made.

This little banter ended a pleasant discussion indulged in at a social gathering in Philadelphia, while the vessels of the two officers of different nations were lying in the Delaware. Although even then the cloud of war hung threateningly over the edge of the horizon, Captain Hull, American, and Captain Dacres, Englishman, old friends, would not allow bitterness to creep into their hearts against each other.

How little did either realize that they were very soon to be pitted against each other on two

different occasions—one in a stern chase of many miles, when neither dreamed of the identity of the other—the other in a ferocious combat, each squarely set, each forgetting self and friend and thinking only of duty to country! Such bitter incidents are not uncommon to the demands of the Juggernaut of War.

We have already seen, in the preceding chapter, the result of the first meeting of these two friends, now rivals. We shall now see how they finally met by accident and forever settled the question of which of their proudful ships was the better fighter.

After her escape from the British fleet, the *Constitution* remained at Boston only a few days, and then set out on a cruise to the eastward along the New England coast. Bad luck seemed to follow her. Not a prize did she take until she reached a point off Cape Sable. Here she captured two small English merchantmen, and forced an English sloop-of-war to relinquish an American brig. Shortly afterward a Salem privateer was spoken, the captain of which informed Captain Hull that he had seen a British frigate cruising in the neighborhood.

This was good news. If he could only come up with the foe warship the monotony of the cruise might be broken. Captain Hull straight-

way set out to scour the sea in quest of the frigate. Never once did he dream that it was the *Guerriere*—the ship of his pre-war friend, Captain Dacres—that he sought.

It was not long before the search was ended. One morning there came a long-drawn hail of "Sail ho-o-o!" from the lookout aloft. The course of the *Constitution* was at once shaped toward the stranger, who was not yet visible from the deck. In half an hour she was made out to be a frigate. As she was seen to alter presently her own course, and bear toward the American vessel, it was assumed that she was either a friend or a very audacious foe.

Without waiting longer, determined to be on the safe side, Captain Hull began operations for action. The top-gallant sails were furled, and the lighter spars lowered to the deck. The decks were cleared, and the guns uncovered. Through their glasses the officers could see the stranger making similar preparations; still it was uncertain that she was an enemy.

By five o'clock in the afternoon the two ships were rapidly nearing, but were still too far off to accurately identify. The drums on the American frigate beat to quarters. Then followed the rush of barefooted men along the deck, as they ran hastily and in perfect order to their various stations. As the roll of the drums died away,

the shrill voices of the midshipmen rose, calling off the quarter-bills, answered by the gruff responses of the men at their posts.

The *Guerriere* was not one bit behindhand in her preparations for a possible conflict. Although Captain Dacres had been unable to establish the identity of the other vessel, he was too good a commander, like Hull, to take it for granted that she was a friend. At length he called to his side Captain William Orne, an American sailor whom he had taken prisoner with Orne's vessel some days before. Handing the American his glass, Captain Dacres said:

"Captain Orne, what do you think of that vessel? Is she friend or foe to me?"

Taking the spyglass Orne inspected the distant frigate carefully. He saw by her peculiar sails and general appearance that she was without doubt an American vessel. Being too honest to deceive the British captain, as he might have done to the advantage of his friends had he chosen, he answered candidly:

"I think, sir, from her behavior, that she is an American frigate, but I do not recognize her."

"He has a familiar look to me somehow," said Dacres, puzzled. "I can hardly credit him with being an American, however, for he comes down too boldly for such."

"It is by his very boldness that I make certain

he is an American," retorted the prisoner with great warmth.

The British officer laughed good-humoredly. "So be it, sir," he said. "The better he behaves, the more credit we shall gain by taking him."

As the two ships came down toward each other, the *Guerriere* backed her main topsail, and waited for her opponent to draw near enough to commence action—if action there was to be. As Dacres stood thus, he set the English flag at each masthead, and beat to quarters.

And when the frigate came to within two or three miles, she took in all her light sails, reefed her topsails, and made final preparations for combat. Then she filled away and ran down to meet the *Guerriere*.

On board the latter, Captain Dacres turned again to his American prisoner. "Captain Orne," he said politely, "as I suppose you do not wish to fight against your own countrymen, you are at liberty to retire below the water-line."

The American officer bowed, filled with admiration for the gallant conduct of the British captain, and started for the cockpit. With him went half a dozen American seamen whom Dacres had impressed into his crew, and whom he now chivalrously relieved from duty. Such fine conduct is not often met in the home of an enemy.

Now Captain Dacres saw the Stars-and-Stripes

go up to the masthead of the frigate, and realized that his preparations had been well-timed. Instantly he let go with his weather broadside. Observing that his shot had fallen short, he wore the *Guerriere* around and tried her port broadside. Most of this went through the American's rigging, though two shots took effect in her hull.

In response to this, the *Constitution* yawed a little. *Bang! bang!* went two of her bow guns. Once more the *Guerriere* fired her broadsides. In this manner the battle continued for about an hour, at long range, the American ship saving her ammunition and only responding to the heavy broadsides of her antagonist with occasional shot.

As this ineffectual firing continued, the two vessels had been slowly drawing nearer and nearer, and the gunners on the *Constitution* became so restless under their inaction that they could hardly keep still. Captain Hull was pacing the quarter-deck with short, quick steps, trying to keep cool, but inwardly much excited. While thus engaged, Lieutenant Morris, the second in command, came up and asked his permission to let him respond with a broadside, declaring the gunners were becoming almost unruly in their impatience to do more firing.

But Hull shook his head. Some minutes later the request was repeated. This time there was no response at all; Captain Hull seemed too en-

grossed in pacing to and fro and watching the enemy to even hear the words or see his junior officer, who, non-plused, retired once more.

When, a little later, the ships were within half-pistol-shot of one another, the smothered excitement in Hull's breast suddenly broke out.

"Now, boys, pour it into them!" he shouted at the top of his lungs, gesticulating with such violence that the tight breeches of his naval uniform split far down the side.

Lieutenant Morris repeated his superior's orders, though in slightly modified terms. "Hull her, lads! Hull her!" he cried.

And the crew, catching up his words and the significance of their double meaning, joyously yelled in chorus: "Hull her! Hull her! Hull her!"

The guns had already been carefully aimed. Now, with slow-match, they were touched off. The effect of the first broadside was terrific. Captain Orne, deep in the cockpit of the *Guerriere,* said afterward that he "heard a tremendous explosion from the opposing frigate. The effect of her shot seemed to make the *Guerriere* reel and tremble as though she had received the shock of an earthquake. Immediately after this I heard a tremendous shock on deck, and was told that the mizzen-mast was shot away. In a few moments the cockpit where I was was filled with

wounded men. I did not like to see them suffer, but I was overjoyed that the American was getting in such good work."

But in the seclusion of the cockpit, this American prisoner could gain little idea of the work of destruction going on above. He could not see the gunners on the two ships, their bare breasts covered with stains of powder and rivulets of blood and sweat, pulling fiercely at the gun-tackle and wielding rammers with frantic energy. He could not see the British ship's mizzen-mast go crashing and hurtling from its ragged stump into the sea, carrying with it some of the topmen and throwing others far out into the churning waters, choked with freshly-made *débris*. He could not see the great, ragged breach torn in the *Guerriere's* quarter by the falling mast, nor observe the frantic energy with which the British sailors went to work to clear away the wreckage on deck.

While this was going on the *Constitution* drew slowly ahead, pouring in several other destructive broadsides. Then she luffed until she lay right athwart the enemy's bow. This brought the bowsprit of the *Guerriere* across the quarter-deck of the American, where it was soon fouled in the mizzen-rigging of the latter.

High and clear on the evening air now sounded the notes of two bugles. One came from the *Constitution,* the other from the *Guerriere.*

Each was calling up its crew of boarders. Like modern rival football gladiators, ready for the game, they responded to the signal. But instead of a trophy of goals to lead them to victory, in this case it was to be a trophy of dead men. Now see them come rushing,—boarding-caps on head, cutlass in one hand, cocked pistol in the other,—to the near-side of their respective vessels!

But a heavy sea is rolling and tossing the two frigates; to board either seems almost impossible. As Captain Dacres observes this he recalls his men back to the guns.

Even though each party is forced to stick to its own ship, so close are they that all weapons except the cutlasses can be used. From the tops comes a steady rain of leaden missiles down upon the heads of the adversary, one of which slightly wounds Captain Dacres. The protruding muzzles of the big guns often touch the near side of the rival ship; when they are drawn in for reloading, after their deep-toned thunder, the sailors quickly thrust their muskets through the ports. The rattle of small arms is almost incessant, sounding like millions of stones being cast against a suspended piece of sheetiron; muskets and pistols blend together in their reports. And interspersed throughout it all are the ever-present human tones—sometimes in peremptory command, sometimes in anger, sometimes in re-

proach, sometimes in pain, sometimes in exultation, sometimes in sacrificial glorification, sometimes in weakened gasps—seldom in fear.

In the midst of the turmoil of heroic tragedy there suddenly shrills high above all other noises a new human cry—a cry of portentous dread: "Fire! Fire! Fire!"

And, for a moment ceasing their fighting, the startled jackies aboard the *Constitution* see one of their own men pointing excitedly to the cabin, from the windows of which billows of smoke are rolling. The fire has been set by the flash of the enemy's gun, so close are the ships. By the hardest kind of exertions a detail of men extinguish the threatened conflagration. The relaxed face of every man shows the relief that is felt as the fighting is resumed with renewed doggedness. A few moments later, a grim American gunner manages to disable the enemy gun that has done the mischief. A cheer goes up from those near him; those in other quarters are too busy even to note the swelling cry.

Lieutenant Morris, with his own hands, is trying to lash the two heaving ships together. Giving up the attempt, he leaps to the taffrail and calls upon his men to follow him aboard the foe. Before the last syllable dies on his lips, Lieutenant Bush of the marines, and Mr. Alwyn, are by his side. *Crash-h-h!* goes a volley of British

musketry, aimed directly at the intrepid three. All pitch backward—Bush dead, Morris and Alwyn badly wounded.

Now comes a ripping, crunching, rending of wood as the sea tosses the fouled ships and their entangled rigging tears asunder. They slowly drift apart, free once more. The heavy smoke of the guns rolls in between, shielding both for a few minutes. As it rises again, the *Constitution's* big guns roar out once more; a great cheer arises from her decks as the *Guerriere's* foremast is vitally fractured, topples, hangs uncertainly for an instant, then with a groan almost human, crashes down, carrying with it the mainmast and a score of unfortunate topmen.

The shattered British ship now lies a shapeless mass, tossing unguided upon the waves. She has lost all her backbone. Even her ensign flutters from a slivered stump.

Drawing away and firing continually and relentlessly with her stern guns, the *Constitution* presently maneuvers herself into a good raking position. As she is on the point of letting go her broadside, the colors on the enemy ship are hauled down.

What a cheer goes up from the Americans!—what a hoarse, tired, happy, boisterous cheer!

Captain Hull's rugged face bears a queer look. In his features you read a strange mixture—

triumph and pain; triumph for his beloved country, pain for his dear adversary. He cannot face him right now. Therefore, he calls Lieutenant Read and sends him aboard the *Guerriere*.

"Captain Hull presents his compliments, sir, and wishes to know if you have really struck your flag," states Read.

Captain Dacres's face is a study. Then he responds dryly, with a significant glance at the shattered masts and bloody deck of his ship: "Well, I don't know. Our mizzen-mast is gone, our main-mast is gone, our men are gone—and I think, on the whole, you may say that we have struck our colors."

After looking about the ship, which he found in a fearful condition, with scores of killed and wounded, untackled guns surging from side to side, and some petty officers and seamen even intoxicated, Lieutenant Read returned to the British captain.

"Would you like the assistance of a surgeon, sir, or a surgeon's mate, in caring for your wounded?"

Dacres looked surprised, and responded:

"I should suppose you had on board your own ship business enough for all your medical officers."

"Sir," answered Read, "we have only seven wounded, and they have been dressed long ago!"

Captain Dacres was astounded, as well he might be; for on the decks of his own ship lay twenty-three dead or mortally wounded men, while in the cockpit the surgeons were doing their best to alleviate the sufferings of fifty-six others.

The Americans now set to work to remove the prisoners from the *Guerriere,* which was evidently in a sinking condition. Needless to say, they were pleased to find that in the capture they had given freedom to some of their own countrymen—Captain Orne in particular.

In the first boat-load from the British ship came its sad commander, Captain Dacres, who was politely shown into Captain Hull's cabin. Unclasping his sword, the conquered British officer extended it silently and formally to his old-time friend.

But Captain Hull, with trembling lip, shoved it gently back. "No, no, Captain," said he; "I'll not take a sword from one who knows how to handle it so courageously,—but"—into his eyes came a roguish look,—"but, if you don't mind I will now trouble you for that hat!"

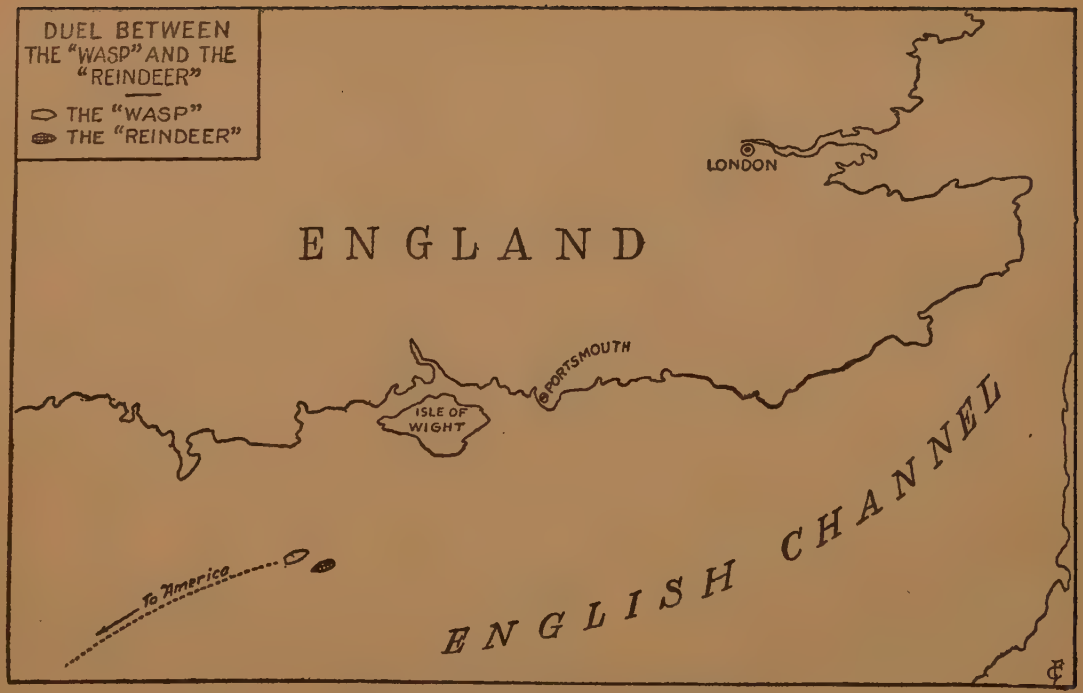
For a moment a shade of perplexity passed over the brow of the humbled British captain; then he recollected the wager of a year or two back, there in Philadelphia, and sheathing his formality with his sword, he shook hands laughingly but pathetically with his former comrade.

## VIII

## THE SHIP THAT STRANGELY DISAPPEARED

What cruel fate is this,
That one so gallant, a master of the seas,
Fearing naught, sailing where she please,
Should vanish in the dark of night,
And never leave a sign in sight—
No bit of wreckage, no floating mast
To show which way she might have pass'd?

—*Bellwright.*




THE "WASP" AND THE "REINDEER"

## The Ship That Strangely Disappeared

For as much as one hundred and fifty years before the War of 1812 England had been a virtual "mistress of the seas." The war-ships of no nation were able to compete successfully against those of Great Britain, although in that time practically every European power had matched its naval craft against her. And when, in 1812, the unknown navy of the new nation growing up across the Atlantic did what no old navy had ever been able to do, not only the English but the people of Continental Europe opened their eyes wide in wonder, and the former were greatly humiliated and aroused.

So it was the Americans who first proved to the world that the English could be beaten at their own favorite game. It was the Americans who did what the huge fleets of France, Spain, and Holland had failed to do. And—greatest credit of all—they did it without large fleets and squadrons, with a mere handful of frigates and sloops, hammered together at short notice, and manned and equipped with crude material. But untrained as they were, those seamen were full

of American spirit and initiative—so full of it that their deeds with solitary ships have been honored with as much attention by modern writers of naval warfare in the Old World as bestowed upon the actions of whole fleets in other wars.

Among the famous ships of the Americans in this war were two which carried the name of *Wasp.* The first one built was an eighteen-gun sloop which at the very outset of hostilities captured a British brig of twenty guns, but unfortunately she was herself taken a little later on by an enemy seventy-four. In memory of her the Americans gave the same name to a new sloop which they had been building. These sloops-of-war were very stoutly made, and their swiftness compared favorably with any European ships of their class, for the American shipwrights were already as famous as the American gunners and seamen.

The new *Wasp,* like most of her sister ships of sloop build, carried twenty-two guns. She was ship-rigged, and had a crew of one hundred and seventy men. Twenty of her guns were carronades, shooting thirty-two pound projectiles, and intended for short range. Her remaining two guns were bow-chasers, termed "Long Toms," which had far stronger carrying power.

It was in 1814, during the last year of the war,

that the *Wasp* sailed from the United States to prey on the navy and commerce of Great Britain. For commander she had a gallant South Carolinian named Captain Johnson Blakeley. Her crew were nearly all native Americans, being an exceptionally fine set of men, quick to act, and afraid of nothing above or below the sun except the wrath of God. Instead of staying near the American coastline, or sailing the high seas for her prizes, the *Wasp* at once boldly turned her nose toward the English Channel, bent upon carrying the war to the very doors of the enemy, as John Paul Jones had done thirty-seven years before.

By this time the British fleets had obtained such complete supremacy over European waters that the ships of the French, who were friendly with the United States, were almost completely bottled up, and could not get out to render the aid to America they would so much have liked to. Night and day, in calm, squall, and tempest, these great blockading squadrons of England keep watch upon the rival war-ships of the French emperor, as a cat crouches and awaits the first movement of the little mouse for a quick pounce. Other British ships of war patrolled the seas unchecked, ready to pick up the first rash French vessel or American ship they could see.

In spite of all this vigilance of the enemy he

found he could not close up all the gates into the seas, nor frighten those he watched into tamely staying off the waters. A few French privateers slipped out now and then. The bolder and more formidable American privateersmen drove hither and thither across the ocean in their swift craft, laughing at the enemy's frantic efforts to catch them, and harassing the English commerce without mercy.

Of these American privateers the *Wasp* was one of the most audacious. She proceeded at once, upon crossing the Atlantic, to cruise boldly in the English Channel and off the coasts of England, France, and Spain. Here, in the very teeth of British naval power, threatened by enemy fleets convoying detachments of troops for Wellington's Peninsular army, menaced by enemy squadrons guarding British merchantmen, imperiled by divers foe ships-of-the-line, out looking for stray privateers like herself, the *Wasp* kept on. Many was the time that her escape from capture was narrow; but by the splendid seamanship of her crew and the vigilance and skill of her commander, she kept on threading the dangerous home waters of her adversary, as saucy and daring as you please.

Before she had been long on the ground, one June morning found her giving chase to a couple of English merchantmen. In the midst of the

exciting pursuit, her lookout from the masthead reported a strange vessel of suspicious character bearing down fast from leeward. A little later the stranger was close enough for Captain Blakeley to see that she was a British brig-of-the-line. She was, in fact, the *Reindeer,* of eighteen guns and one hundred and twenty men, commanded by Captain Manners of the Royal navy. At once the American captain decided to drop his pursuit of the merchantmen and engage the war-ship.

The sky was a beautiful azure-blue; the air mild and still. The very lightest wind stirred across the wide expanse of sea. At one o'clock the *Wasp's* drum beat to quarters, and at once every man ran quickly to his post, while the sails were furled into fighting trim.

The *Reindeer's* drum also beat to order, and she too made preparations for battle which could be plainly seen from the deck of the American vessel. On her forecastle she had rigged a light carronade, and as she now came down from astern of the *Wasp,* she fired this gun five times point-blank at the American sloop, some of the shots taking effect in the latter's hull but doing little damage.

In answer, the *Wasp* now luffed slowly round, firing her heavy carronades as she bore. In a few moments the rival ships had closed; yard-

arm to yard-arm they lay, almost in a mortal embrace. Terrific was the thunder of the heavy guns of both. No sooner did a gun spit out its venom of hot lead than its grimy gunner pulled in its smoking muzzle, its equally grimy swabber swabbed it, and it was loaded and thrust through the port again for another merciless discharge of hate. Like demons these men worked at the breeches, while on the decks and the tops other men fired with pistols and muskets at every human target presenting itself.

As the vessels ground together the American sailors sprang to the bulwarks to make the union sure by throwing grapnels over the *Reindeer*. They were protected by their brother jackies below and aloft, who discharged a veritable shower of shot into the foe, many of whom made desperate efforts to rush forward and frustrate the design by savage thrust of pike and bark of pistol and slash of cutlass. In this struggle Captain Manners himself was wounded.

But a wound could not deter the brave British commander. At this juncture he gave his own men the order to gather for boarding. Immediately they came running up, many naked above the waist, their skin already streaked with sickening red in spots and blacked with powder smudges in others; cutlass gripped in one rough fist, pistol in the other.

However, the Americans were quick to see their new danger. Behind the bulwarks of the *Wasp* crouched the American pikemen, with set countenances and restless feet and hands; behind them, drawn up on the deck, cutlassed and pistoled, stood the sturdy, tanned marines of the new country; at the right and left, on stations of elevated vantage where they could note every movement of the foe, were the cool blue-coated officers, swords in hand, ready to meet any emergency themselves.

Now came Captain Manners's signal to his men of, "Boarders away!"

Like a snapping bowstring the taut nerves of the men on both sides flew into action. The British sea-dogs began to tumble over the rail of the American ship—only to perish by shot or steel, to go down like weeds under the hoe of the husbandman. Still they persisted, brave men that they were. Desperately they stabbed with pike and cut arcs with their cutlasses. Fully as desperately did they pull trigger of pistol, and attempt to force their way well upon the American deck.

Seeing his men stagger and hesitate, on the very verge of rout, the dauntless Manners shouted encouragment and sprang to their head. Too late! Even while his arm was extended forward, indicating the goal, the bullet of an

American sharpshooter in the foretop came unerringly down and crushed through his skull.

As Manners fell, his men became panic-stricken. They were quickly forced back to their own deck, and then came the order of Captain Blakeley himself to board. Over the bulwarks of the enemy ship they scrambled, shouting like men gone daft. Absolutely irresistible was their advance. With wild cheers they swept the wreck of the British seamen before them, and in almost the time it takes to tell it the *Reindeer* was in their possession.

Every officer on board the enemy craft had been killed, while at least two-thirds of her crew had been killed or wounded. That they had fought valiantly was shown by the fact that twenty-six Americans had suffered death or injuries.

Having no desire to return to home shores right away, and not wishing to be handicapped with a prize consort, the crew of the *Wasp* removed the British to their own vessel and then applied the torch to the *Reindeer*.

After running into a friendly French port to refit, the *Wasp* once more put to sea in quest of new laurels. For some time she met no antagonist worthy of her timber; moreover, she had to exercise the utmost vigilance to escape capture.

Late one September afternoon she found her-

self within striking distance of an isolated British brig which belonged to a squadron whose other ships had become somewhat widely separated in a recent storm. Although the brig's sister ships were too close to promise a successful attack on her in broad daylight, Captain Blakeley thought he stood some chance under cover of darkness.

Accordingly, keeping the *Wasp* far behind, where her identity was unlikely even to be suspected, he trailed after the *Avon,* which carried eighteen guns and was in some respects a more powerful craft than the American vessel. During the night he came up with the pursued after following his lights for some time, and bearing very close fired a heavy broadside into the *Avon,* whose astonished captain had taken him for one of the other British ships.

As soon as she could do so the *Avon* turned her own guns upon her attacker, while sailors set lamp signals high on her fore-mast calling to her compatriots for aid. Plunging and wallowing in the sea, which was running quite high, both sides found the aiming difficult. But the firing was fast and furious, nevertheless.

The British marksmanship was very bad; few hits were scored. On the other hand, the Americans displayed their customary superiority at this game, and before long with such effect that

the hull of the British brig was in deplorable condition. Noting that she was sinking, her commander struck his flag and cried for quarter. Fifty of his men had been laid low, while only three Americans had sustained wounds.

Before the *Wasp* could take possession of her prize two British ships which had seen the signals of their distressed friend, or heard the firing, unexpectedly put in an appearance. Extinguishing his own lights, Captain Blakeley adroitly sneaked away in the darkness, with one enemy shot chasing after him. Had only one foe ship come to the rescue of the *Avon* he would promptly have attacked it. With the enemy all around him, his feat of running in and destroying one of their ships was remarkably bold and wonderful in its accomplishment; he was too sagacious a seaman to spoil his good work now by remaining to engage insurmountable odds.

After this the *Wasp* took other prizes. Once she came across a convoy of British ships carrying arms and munitions of war to Wellington's army, under the protection of a big two-decker war-ship. Hanging on the outskirts of this convoy, like a hawk over a barnyard, the swift sloop watched her chance and finally swooped down upon one of the transports and destroyed it, before the mothering ship could bring her guns to bear.

This was the last known feat ever performed by the gallant little *Wasp*. Her country never again heard from her; Europe never heard from her. Where had she gone? The seas were scoured for her by friend and foe alike; but the waters seemed to have opened up, and swallowed the daring sloop and her daring crew, leaving no human survivor, not even an identifying splinter of wood, scrap of metal, or fragment of uniform. And nothing more is known about her to this day.

## IX

## THE "MONITOR" AND THE "MERRIMAC"

We are not idle, but send her straight
Defiance back in a full broadside!
As hail rebounds from a roof of slate,
Rebounds our heavier hail
From each iron scale
Of the monster's hide.

—*Longfellow.*

THE "MONITOR" AND THE "MERRIMAC"

# The *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*

## THE "QUAKER MEETIN'-HOUSE FLOATING DOWN THE BAY"

DURING the Civil War, in our own country, the Union forces retreated from Norfolk and left the Navy-Yard a mass of flames. Among the Confederate craft destroyed at this time was the fine steam frigate *Merrimac,* of forty guns, which was scuttled and sunk in the channel.

Three or four months after the occupation of the Norfolk Navy-Yard by the Confederates, Lieutenant George M. Brooke was inspired with the idea of raising the *Merrimac* and converting her into a new and very formidable type of war vessel. He carefully worked out his plans, and submitted them to the Confederate government. They were approved, and orders immediately given for beginning the work of redemption.

As originally built the *Merrimac* had no superior in the United States waters. Her solid oak sides rose high above the water, and were pierced by a long row of gaping port-holes. Her masts were tall and imposing, with long yard-arms; and when her sails were all set they pre-

sented such a great expanse of canvas that her hull, big as it was, looked small and insignificant.

This splendid ship was accordingly raised, worked into dry-dock, and all her rigging removed, leaving only the massive hull. Then both ends, for a distance of seventy feet, were decked over. The gap between, one hundred and seventy feet long, was covered with a slanting roof which extended about seven feet above the gun-deck. This was of pitch pine and oak, twenty-four inches thick, and was finally covered with a shield of two-inch iron plates. The upper part of the roof, which was flat, was railed in, making a kind of promenade deck. The gun-deck was completely inclosed by this heavy wall of wood and iron, nothing appearing above it but a short smokestack and two flag-staffs. In the chamber formed by the roof were mounted ten guns, the bow and stern pieces being of seven-inch caliber—fairly powerful weapons in that day.

A queer feature of the craft—one not discovered until she was launched—was that the weight of the iron plating and heavy guns sank her so deeply in the water that the low decks forward and aft of the gun-room were always under water. This practically submerged her hull entirely, giving her a very strange appearance. Indeed, the

old salt on the *Cumberland,* who was the first Federal seaman to sight her, gravely reported her thus to his superior officer, "Quaker meetin'-house floating down the bay, sir."

When this naval monster was completed she was christened the *Virginia,* but somehow the public did not take kindly to the new appellation, and ever after she was known by the name of the old frigate from which she had come into being. And thus shall I speak of her.

The new *Merrimac* received as commander Commodore Franklin Buchanan, an ex-Union officer of ability and daring. His junior officers were also very capable men; but his crew was far from as efficient as he would have liked. While there were a few good sailors, most of them knew nothing about seamanship, having been picked out of the Confederate army ranks. There was no chance to drill these men, for up to the very hour of sailing to do battle, the ship was crowded with workmen getting her ready for her task of breaking the Yankee blockade. When she did finally leave her berth, she was an untried ship, not a gun had been fired, and not a revolution of her engines had been made in open waters since their resurrection, slimy and rusty, from the bottom of the channel.

On Saturday, the 8th of March, 1862—the

same day that Fremont fought the battle of Pea Ridge,—the strange iron leviathan steamed into the mouth of the James River from Norfolk. She was accompanied by four small Confederate gunboats—the *Yorktown,* the *Beaufort,* the *Jamestown,* and the *Teaser.* Boldly and calmly the *Merrimac* headed straight for the Federal blockading fleet, which she could plainly make out off Newport News in Hampton Roads.

It was a fine, mild morning, such as is common in southern Virginia during the early spring. On board the Union frigates *Cumberland* and *Congress,* which were doing guard-duty and anchored a half-mile off shore, every sailor was enjoying the weather and pleasing himself with the prospect of going North in a day or two at the farthest and being relieved of the monotony of blockading at anchor. Some were pacing the poop, gazing idly off at the blue waters; others were lounging on deck watching the ever-present sea-gulls fighting for remnants of victuals which the galley-boy had just thrown over the rail; still others leaned against the capstan and sat on coils of rope, swapping yarns with one another.

One bell had struck some time, and the quartermaster on watch was expecting to hear the tolling off of another division of the day when his attention was drawn to an unusual appearance against the fringe of woods away over in the Norfolk

channel. After gazing intently for several minutes, he approached the officer of the deck, and presenting him the glass, said, "I believe that pesky contraption of the Johnny Rebs is a-comin' down at last, sir!"

The fact of the matter is, the Confederates had not been working long on the new craft before word of their operations had reached the Federals. While the news was the subject of a good deal of scoffing, nevertheless the Union fleet had been curiously watching for her appearance for some time, not without some vague uneasiness at that.

So now the officer of the deck was quick to seize the quarter-master's glass and level it across the waters. Sure enough! There was a huge black roof, with a short smokestack emerging from it, creeping down toward Sewall's Point. Three or four satellites, in the shape of small gunboats, clustered near her. There was a great stir among the Union shipping when the strangers finally showed themselves clear of the point. But they turned up into the James River channel instead of down toward the fort, and approached the anchorage of the *Cumberland* and *Congress* with great deliberation.

As soon as it was apparent that the strange creature intended to make an attack on them, the drums of both vessels beat to quarters, and as

quickly as possible everything was put in ship-shape order for fighting.

The *Merrimac* was such a grotesque, clumsy-looking craft that the majority of the sailors thought she would be speedily destroyed. Even most of the officers on the *Cumberland* and *Congress* had little misgivings on that score, now that they saw her coming leisurely toward them. So they made their preparations to fight gayly, fully believing in their ability to gain the mastery, as up to that time Northern arms had easily maintained the supremacy at sea.

By a little after four bells, or two o'clock, the iron-clad ship was close enough for a shot, and the *Cumberland,* which stood nearest, tried her with a solid shot from one of their stern guns. To the unbounded surprise of the crew, who saw the shot strike fair against the *Merrimac's* sloping casement, the ball slid off like a drop of water on a duck's back.

Before another shot was forthcoming, the *Merrimac* threw aside the screen from one of her forward ports, and answered with a charge of grape which killed and wounded quite a number of those on the *Cumberland.* Without pausing, she then began passing her adversary. As she did so the *Cumberland* fired a broadside into her at a distance of less than two hundred yards. Like peas thrown from a tin shooter, these shot rattled

harmlessly against her boiler-plate, and the men on the big ship opened their eyes still wider in surprise.

Then surprise turned into consternation. The *Merrimac's* own broadside was suddenly let loose with terrible effect. One of the shells dismounted an eight-inch gun, bringing every member of its crew to the deck, while the slaughter of many of the other shells was nearly as frightful. Few were wounded, the fragments of the huge shells of the Confederate ironclad killing almost every man they touched.

Meanwhile the grim monster which had caused all this bloodshed passed on up the stream. Thinking that perhaps they had damaged her more than outward appearances showed, and that she had received enough punishment and was about to make off, the survivors aboard the *Cumberland* began to cheer. But, unhappy, deceived mortals, it was the last cheer that many of them ever gave.

Standing up abreast of the bow of the Union ship, the *Merrimac* suddenly put her helm aport, and ran her sharp, submerged steel bow into the frigate. There was a sickening crunch of timbers, a heart-rending tearing and ripping. Then, reversing her engines, the powerful ram ran back a little, and once more came steaming forward upon her prey, paying not the slightest

attention to the shots that were rained upon her armor. Again she struck amidships; again there rose that depressing rending of wood as a great gap opened up in the side of the hapless *Cumberland.* At the same time the *Merrimac* played her guns mercilessly upon the unprotected sailors of her enemy.

Rapidly now the *Cumberland* went down. Her lower deck was soon awash. Yet her guns still huskily barked out defiance. Deeper she sank, and some of her redhot guns sizzled in the water that closed around them. The very last gun to be engulfed was fired while her mad gunner stood knee-deep in water. Then, with a moaning lurch almost human, the old frigate settled to the bottom, but not entirely into oblivion. For "a few feet of her top-masts rose above the waves, and there the Stars-and-Stripes still floated, victorious in death."

It had taken about three-quarters of an hour for the formidable new monster of the sea to dispatch the *Cumberland* in the summary manner shown. That vessel taken care of, she now turned her grim attention to the *Congress.*

In the meantime this ship, seeing the fate of her sister vessel and not caring to share a like one, had set her topsails and jib, slipped her chains, and made a run for it. After her went many shots from the small gunboats which had

accompanied the *Merrimac,* and which had been laying-to during the fight of their ugly consort, as if they knew she could amply take care of herself and wanted to have the *Congress* left as dessert. These shots killed and wounded a number on the fleeing craft.

As she was running over the flats which make off from Newport News, the *Congress* was unfortunate enough to ground in the shallow waters. She struggled in every way to release herself, but it was a hopeless task, for the tide was running out and her buoyancy thereby constantly decreasing. As the waters continued to fall she keeled over, leaving only the two guns in the stern ports which could be used.

Two large Union steam-frigates and a sailing-frigate had noted the peril of the *Congress.* Towed by tugs these now started up from Hampton Roads to the assistance of the stranded vessel; but, before they had achieved half the distance, they also ran aground. Undoubtedly it was fortunate for them that they did, as otherwise the chances are the dreadful *Merrimac,* which could not reach them in their present position, would have served them as she had served the luckless *Cumberland.*

Having discovered the new position of her prospective prey, the iron leviathan now made leisurely toward the grounded ship. Taking up

a position about one hundred and fifty yards astern of the *Congress,* she deliberately raked her with eighty-pound shell, while her consorts, the *Yorktown,* the *Beaufort,* the *Jamestown,* and the *Teaser,* assisted by throwing in their smaller charges. The acting-master and coast-pilot of the frigate fell, mortally wounded, along with many less important men.

The *Congress* fought back desperately with her pitifully poor armament, using her stern guns so incessantly that they grew so hot the gunners dare not lay hand on their breeches. But in a little while even these two pieces were disabled, one having its muzzle knocked off by a direct hit from the *Merrimac.* Then rifles and carbines had to be depended upon wholly, their users making every effort, from deck and the tops, to pick off the enemy crew whenever the huge ports of the iron monster were seen to open for her guns to be thrust out and fired.

The dry timbers of the doomed vessel now caught fire in three places almost simultaneously. In vain the crew fought these flames, while the enemy shot continued to rain in upon them. Only a handful could handle the pails and hose; the remainder of the crew lay stretched all about with pain-riven eyes and paralyzed limbs, or with closed eyes and clammy limbs that would never move again.

Seeing the dreadfulness of the situation, the acting commander of the *Congress* ordered the flag to be struck. With wet eyes he stood with his back to it during this humiliating operation.

At once the commander of the *Merrimac* sent a boat up to the surrendered craft, but when the officer in charge found that Federal soldiers were firing toward him and his crew from the shore, he refused to take off any of the wounded, and beat a hasty retreat to the ram. The ironclad then began to fire once more into the *Congress* in a most heartless manner, even though she flew a white flag.

After ten or fifteen minutes of this, she ceased shooting and with her consorts proceeded down the channel, to bestow attention upon the frigate *Minnesota* which, as previously stated, was hard aground. But, owing to the shallow water, the ram could not reach her third prey, and with a few parting shots she and her sister ships made their way up the Norfolk Channel, satisfied to wait till another sunrise before attacking other ships of the Federal blockaders.

It was found that only twenty-one of her crew had been wounded, most of these having been struck by the rifle-fire of the soldiers on shore while alongside the surrendered *Congress*, and not a single man had been killed. Not an atom of damage had been done to the interior of the

craft, but nothing outside seemed to have escaped. The muzzles of two guns had been shot away; her ram had been wrenched loose in withdrawing from the *Cumberland,* her boat davits, smokestack, railings, and flag-staffs had been swept entirely away as if they never existed, and great dents covered her impenetrable sides. But as far as her fighting qualities went she was as good as when she started out that morning.

## THE "CHEESE-BOX ON A RAFT"

THE news of the engagement between the *Merrimac* and her Federal victims, the *Cumberland* and the *Congress,* caused the most intense excitement throughout America, and indeed throughout the whole world; but the North and South, of course, were particularly affected by it.

At a hastily called cabinet meeting in Washington, the Secretary of War said: "The *Merrimac* will destroy every one of our naval craft. If she can get up the Potomac it is not unlikely she will throw her shells or cannon-balls in the White House itself." In an hour's time, figuratively, the strength of the Union navy and coast defenses had crumbled before this absurd "Quaker meetin' house" which had come "float-

ing down the bay." No one knew where the ravages thus begun would end.

In this excited condition, mad with joy, or filled with dread and consternation, all of the contending States went to sleep that March night, little dreaming that the morrow would change the whole face of the situation and introduce a newer and more terrible form of sea-fighter than had sprung up yet. Even as people slept this queer little untried vessel was steaming toward Hampton Roads, there to give challenge to the dreaded *Merrimac*. In the next twenty-four hours this unknown craft—the *Monitor*—and her inventor —John Ericsson—would be talked about on every street corner, at every cross-roads, and in every home, throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Captain John Ericsson was a Swedish engineer, residing in America, who had already placed his name on the roll of fame by inventing the screw-propeller for driving steamships. With the opening of the war Ericsson had become much interested in devising a new type of battleship which should be covered with metal to make her impenetrable to the shot then in use. He became so abstracted in his idea that he worked on it day and night, first drawing careful plans, then working out and assembling the parts of a small model. This he tried in secret in a small body of water

one night near his home. Delighted with the behavior of his little ship, he appealed to a Connecticut capitalist by the name of C. S. Bushnell for money with which to produce a full-sized counterpart of the "monitor," as he termed the craft. Mr. Bushnell, however, insisted upon first taking the model to Washington to see what the Naval Board thought of it.

Their efforts at the seat of government met with a somewhat cold reception. After a long explanation had been made by Ericsson of the virtues of his little model, he and his friend were calmly dismissed with these words: "It resembles nothing in the heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth. It would sink of itself if put in the water. You can take it home, and worship it without violating any Commandment."

Such a verdict was really insulting, but the wise inventor knew that these Government officials could not be expected to know the valuable points about his product at a first hearing of this kind. So he did not give up, but persisted in demonstrating his model's good features again and again. Finally some members of the Board were convinced that it might be well to try out the new craft, and a resolution was passed to have John Ericsson build a monitor for the Govern-

ment, provided he would stand the expense of production if the venture proved a failure.

With this grudging permission, the inventor, aided by capital furnished by Mr. Bushnell, worked with might and main to build the new ship. Night and day the adzes sent huge chips flying from the great oaken timbers, and night and day the ringing blows of the hammers, as they headed over rivets in the iron plates, could be heard in the vicinity. Constantly the operations were guarded, and no man without a pass was permitted to come near.

At last, one day in the spring, just one hundred days after her starting, the last rivet had been sent home, and the *Monitor* was ready to be launched. Great was the discussion over her strange proportions. Like the men in Washington when they first saw the model, distinguished engineers now declared she would never float; many attended the launching expecting to see the new ship plunge from the ways to the bottom of the river, like a turtle from a log. The truth is, so general was this impression that they had insisted on having boats in readiness to rescue her passengers in case she met their expectations.

But Captain Ericsson had laid his plans carefully; he knew far more about novel craft than these engineers and other naval critics. The

queer vessel glided down the ways heavily but gracefully, threw a great geyser of water high into the air as her bow cut in, then came to a level on the surface, where she floated as buoyantly at her cables as a duck.

Truly she was an odd-looking craft. Her deck, as flat as a shingle, lay only two feet above the water. In its center was a large round turret of iron plates, with no visible openings except two port-holes for the guns, which were powerful enough to discharge great balls weighing one hundred and seventy pounds each. This turret was pivoted in the center, so that its inmates could revolve it at will, thus directing the muzzles of the guns to any point of the horizon without changing the position of the ship.

Besides the turret, the smooth surface of the deck was broken by two other elevations. One of these was the pilot-house, in front, while behind was the low smokestack. The pilot-house contained the wheel that communicated with the rudder, and was also round and made of iron plates about ten inches thick. It had one visible opening in the shape of a window for the pilot to watch his course ahead, and this was covered with a protecting screen of heavy metal bars.

It was about midnight of that eventful Saturday which I have described, and while the burning *Congress* was still sending her flaming brands

into the sputtering waters that waited to swallow her, that the anxious garrison at Fortress Monroe noticed a singular-looking craft approaching from the sea, towed by two small steamers. Although they did not know it then, this was the new little *Monitor*—the David of the seas that had come to save her people from the mighty bludgeon of the Southern Goliath. She was but a speck on the blue waters of the night, and not much larger in the light of day, but she had the bite of a mosquito, the sting of a wasp, and carried as much fear of the large in her track as they, as we shall presently see. Lieutenant Worden was in command of the *Monitor,* and acted as her pilot, while Lieutenant Green had charge of the gunners in the turret, and Chief Engineer Stimers looked after the control of the revolving structure.

As the gray dawn of Sunday morning began to break, the newcomer passed under the quarter of the stranded *Minnesota,* and cast anchor. The tars on the great frigate looked curiously at the strange craft that had seemingly come to them out of the very mists of night, and wondered if that insignificant "cheese-box on a raft" were really thinking of staying there till the dreaded *Merrimac* returned to annihilate them every one. They warned her of the situation, and told her she had better scamper away while

the scampering was good. Judge of their unbounded astonishment and amusement when advised by Lieutenant Worden that the small stranger was there to protect *them* and the other grounded vessel, the *St. Lawrence!* Loudly they guffawed. Small hopes had they that their noble frigate and her sister ship could be saved by such a pygmy warrior.

Meanwhile, what of the *Merrimac* herself? This black-coated hero of the sea, up at Norfolk, had had men working on her all night, repairing the slight damage she had suffered in her actions with the *Cumberland* and *Congress.* Her loose ram was reset rigidly, her fractured rudder was mended with reënforcing metal plates, and her complaining old rusty engine was gone over and dosed with oil. By daybreak all was in readiness for the gruesome finishing of her work out in the channel.

Soon the batteries on both sides of the bay were crowded with men, waiting morbidly and curiously to see the *Merrimac* destroy the stranded Federal ships in Hampton Roads, as she had promised. At Norfolk a gay holiday party of the rough-constitutioned was embarking on steam-tugs with the purpose of accompanying the Confederate ram as far as safety would permit. No thought of defeat ever entered the minds of these mad admirers of the new naval king.

Even when, as they were weighing anchor, the crew of the *Merrimac* herself discovered that strange-looking object floating close to the *Minnesota,* far out on the waters, they entertained no misgivings. If this were some new fighting craft that the Federals, in their moment of desperation, had sent out to give them battle, her insignificant size silenced all doubts as to the outcome; probably, they thought, this was merely a raft or scow making an attempt to get the unlucky *Minnesota* off the sandbar.

Leisurely, like one out for a stroll in the morning air, the big *Merrimac* came down the bay, followed by her retinue of tugs. Disdaining a look toward the *Monitor* she kept on till she was within good range of the *Minnesota,* when, of a sudden, her ports flew open and she sent a withering broadside toward the frigate. The *Minnesota* promptly returned the hostility with her own broadside, the shot of which, while well directed, merely beat a tattoo against the mailed sides of the Southerner.

The little *Monitor* seemed to consider that things had now gone far enough against her big friend. She now steamed boldly and swiftly out from behind the *Minnesota,* and the next moment both of her huge guns growled in thunder tones, and two immense iron balls of close to two hundred pounds each came hurtling against the *Mer-*

*rimac's* armor. While they did not penetrate the heavy plate of the enemy, the concussion was such as to frighten the Confederate crew immeasurably. They saw that they would have their hands full enough to attend to this buzzing little hornet for the present, and at once forsook the *Minnesota* and turned to her midget protector.

As the *Merrimac* slowed up her engines, embarrassed for the moment, the *Monitor* attempted to revolve her turret for two more deliveries. But something went wrong, and it stuck. Not to be frustrated, she quickly swung her bow around till her guns were in the position desired, and again they rang out, one after the other. One of these balls struck the roof of the enemy, glanced upward, went whistling through the air, and finally plunged into the sea fully a half-mile distant. The other shot hit squarely on the armored side, and fell, broken into fragments.

Confident in the power of her own ten heavy guns, the *Merrimac* maneuvered to bring these to bear upon her agile antagonist, and finally let them fly with a roar that echoed from headland to headland. Her gunners had aimed carefully; but they might just as well have done so carelessly. To their intense surprise every one of the shot that struck the *Monitor* (most of them had passed over, owing to her lowness in the

water) had glanced off her round turret and pilot-house, or been smashed as if they were made of putty. These fellows now began to realize how the Unionists felt when firing at them. Anxiety, and even alarm, began to show in some of their faces. If they could not harm this creature with their heavy shells and ball, what could they do to accomplish her destruction?

Her commander bethought himself of his powerful ram. Ah! here was the solution to the problem; he had pierced the hull of the *Cumberland* as if it had been made of paper; now he would do likewise with this saucy little upstart. Trust him to bring her to time!

Ordering all firing to be withheld, he had his engineer and pilot bring the *Merrimac* around for the plunge. Gaining a favorable position at length, all speed was put on and the heavy craft rushed down upon her smaller antagonist like a towering house. She struck quite fair, but it was not with her wicked ram, but her bow; the latter rode upon the sharp armored edge of the *Monitor's* deck, receiving a bad gash and a jolt so terrific that the men on the *Merrimac's* deck were thrown violently to the planks, with ears ringing and blood streaming from their nostrils.

For a brief moment or two the larger vessel hung upon the edge of the smaller, her great weight dangerously submerging the near side;

then the *Merrimac* slipped off, and the *Monitor* righted as quickly and smilingly as a chip. As the ram pulled off anxiety on the part of her commander and crew had given place to universal dumbfoundment and fear.

"Reserve your fire, my lads," said Worden, on the *Monitor*. "Aim deliberately, and make every shot hit him."

Like opposing pugilists the two vessels now worked themselves into this and that favorable position, and then fired their guns. Round and round they sailed, backing, advancing, making quick dashes forward, reversing, and again firing. The two shots of the little *Monitor* would come banging one after the other against the iron jacket of her adversary, none penetrating, but each seeming to jar her harder than its predecessor. In this dancing contest the smaller ship had an enormous advantage on account of her diminutive size and speed. She dashed right into the face of her enemy and away again, for all the world like a sparrow tantalizing a great hawk. When an occasional shot from the guns of the *Merrimac* did strike her it was more luck than good marksmanship, at which she paid absolutely no attention at all.

All this time her turret contrarily refused to revolve, as planned, but by wheeling about she could overcome this deficiency, and her two guns

continued to rain their immense balls upon the plate of the foe ship with unerring and persistent regularity. *Rap-rap!* they came, about a minute apart,—*rap-rap!*

Finally these tremendous blows commenced to tell, even against the heavy sheet iron; and if the crew of the *Merrimac* had not been so busy at their guns they would have heard the oak timbers behind the plate creaking, groaning, and cracking.

At this critical moment in the fight the Southern boat ran aground. The *Monitor* steamed around her several times, seeking for weakening places in which to plant more shot. Once Lieutenant Worden made a dash toward the enemy's propeller, hoping to strike and disable it, but missed by a narrow margin. Before backing away he sent two shots which were so well aimed that they struck the muzzles of a couple of cannon protruding from the port-holes of the *Merrimac,* and broke them off, scattering ugly splinters of iron among the gunners inside and injuring a number.

Thus the battle went on till about noon. In the meantime the spectators' tugs from Norfolk had scuttled back quite a distance, to avoid the great cannon-balls that were ricocheting along the waters in every direction. Three jagged openings had been finally torn through metal and oak

in the *Merrimac's* mailed side, and deeming discretion the better part of valor she signaled for aid.

While two Confederate tugs were running forward in response, she managed to place a shot fair against the grating of the pilot-house of the *Monitor*. Through this, unfortunately, Lieutenant Worden happened to be looking as he directed his ship into a new position. The concussion, so close to his head, knocked him senseless. Flakes of iron were driven into his face, blinding him completely for the time. He fell back from the wheel, and the *Monitor* was left for a few moments without a guiding hand.

Of course all was confusion on board the *Monitor;* but within a few minutes Worden had recovered sufficiently to give the order to sheer away. While the second officer took the wheel, he was carried to the cabin below deck. Here, lying on a sofa with his eyes bandaged, and the horror of life-long blindness upon him, the brave commander asked faintly, "Have I saved the *Minnesota?*"

"Yes," said the surgeon, "and whipped the *Merrimac.*"

"Then I care not what becomes of me," was the response.

Aside from this single injury to her commander, the *Monitor's* crew had suffered no

wounds at all during the long fight, which now closed; nor was the ship damaged. It is stated that while the two tugs were towing the *Merrimac* off the shoal and back to Norfolk, one officer aboard the little victor stood before a mirror leisurely combing his hair, while an old tar in blue middy sat calmly smoking his pipe.

The two ironclads never met again. After being repaired, the *Merrimac* made some short sorties in Hampton Roads, but failed to engage any more Union vessels. When, on the 9th of May, the Confederate land forces abandoned Norfolk, the officers of the *Merrimac* tried to save her by running her up the James River. But this was found impossible, owing to her great draught, and she was run ashore on Craney Island and deliberately set afire, after being heavily trained with gunpowder.

These two antagonists, each then a queer type, were the forerunners of the modern steel battleship or dreadnought.

## X

## ADMIRAL DAVID FARRAGUT

By the flow of the inland river,
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver,
Asleep on the ranks of the dead:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day;
Under the one, the Blue,
Under the other, the Gray.

*—Finch.*

BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY

# Admiral David Farragut

## BREAKING INTO THE MISSISSIPPI

AMERICA has never had a more popular naval hero than David Glasgow Farragut, born on July 5th, 1801, at Campbell's Station, a border town in eastern Tennessee. Although his father was of pure Spanish descent, foreign born, Farragut himself showed all through his life the most sterling of American qualities, among which his intrepid bravery and loyalty to country stood out with unusual prominence.

No American naval officer has ever served the United States so long with distinction. A midshipman in the first organized navy this country possessed, in 1812, when a mere child of nine years of age, he went through some of the most exciting sea skirmishes of the second war with England. An acting lieutenant at eighteen, he cruised in the Mediterranean seas and had many adventures with pirates, during the course of one of which he defeated the infamous and bloodthirsty Diablito and saw him fall with a bullet through his head. A captain (the highest commission up to that time), at the age of sixty-one,

in the Civil War, he conducted himself with a signal gallantry.

The period of Farragut's brilliant and victorious career really opened in 1862, when he had already been treading a deck in the service of his country more than a half-century. Not until then had the opportunity come for him to demonstrate the full extent of his worth, acquired during fifty-two years' of faithful and intelligent service. Most men would have thought of retiring from ordinary scenes of activity at his age, let alone entering upon new ones which called for almost superhuman endeavor. Not so the hardy Farragut.

Those inland waters which were to be thenceforth inseparably connected with his name and reputation, had become from the first the chief seat of the naval operations of the war. The control of the banks of the Mississippi had for some time been recognized as of primary importance to themselves by the Northerners. But the whole stretch of shore from Memphis to the Gulf of Mexico was held by the Confederates, as a consequence of which they were able to ship large quantities of supplies from the Southwest to the seat of war.

Before President Lincoln and the Federal Naval Board a plan was presented for a naval

expedition against New Orleans. It was thought a fleet of wooden ships under a clever commander might run up past Forts Jackson and St. Philip, the powerful seaward defenses of New Orleans, break through the river obstructions, destroy the Confederate fleet, appear suddenly before the Crescent City, and capture it. The plan was bold and difficult; it would require an officer of resolution and sagacity to carry it into successful execution. Who should it be? Everybody on the Board unhesitatingly said, "Farragut." And Farragut it was.

So on the 9th of January, 1862, he was appointed to the command of the Western Gulf Blockading Squadron, as admiral, and put to sea early in February, from Hampton Roads, in his flagship, the *Hartford*. At Ship Island he was joined by twenty-seven ships, among which were sloops-of-war, gunboats, and twenty-one mortar-schooners, carrying in all two hundred guns. An army of fifteen thousand soldiers, under General Butler, was to follow the fleet in transports and hold the places captured.

The Confederate defenses against which Farragut proposed to pit his strength and skill, were of a very formidable character. The mouth of the Mississippi spreads out into five passes, or channels. At that time these were extremely

difficult of passage owing to large deposits of sand and mud brought down by the mighty river. At a bend in the stream, twenty miles above the passes, two powerful forts defended the approach further on. These defenses mounted a hundred and fifteen guns, and were garrisoned by fifteen hundred soldiers.

Quite close to them two immense chains were stretched across the river, being supported on eight old hulks. Above the forts were anchored the river flotilla and the Confederate fleet of fifteen vessels, including the ironclad ram *Manassas* and the large floating battery *Louisiana*. A hundred miles farther up the stream lay New Orleans, the goal of the Union expedition.

The passing of the extensive sandbar at the mouth of the Mississippi was the first difficulty encountered by Farragut. Some of the heavier ships ran aground several times, and the *Mississippi* herself was dragged by tug-boats through a foot of mud. For fully two weeks the tugs struggled to work the *Pensacola* across, and the passage of the *Brooklyn* required half as long. The *Colorado* could not get over at all.

Once on the other side of the bar the Northern forces breathed easier. Leaving the *Colorado* behind them, the ships steamed up the river to within three miles of Fort Jackson. Several days were spent in suitably placing the mortar-schoon-

ers, all under a strong enemy fire and in open boats. Hidden under the trees whose branches hung well out over the water, and with their projecting masts and rigging camouflaged by bunches of boughs tied to them, the schooners were moored within two miles of the fort, yet were entirely out of view.

On the morning of the 18th of April, Farragut ordered the bombardment to begin. For six days a steady and unremitting firing was kept up by the Northerners, and replied to with energy by the enemy. In that time over six thousand shells fell on the works of Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip, breaking the bastions and carrying damage wherever they struck. During the hours of night the bombardment would slacken, which gave the weary men a needed respite.

After darkness had settled down in earnest that first day, and quietness had wrapped itself about the ships of the Northern fleet, the whole sky was suddenly lighted as if by a vast conflagration. Looking up-stream, the Federals saw great tongues of flame shooting up into the black void of night, close to the water. The mammoth furnace of fire came slowly drifting down upon them, swaying uncertainly this way and that, borne on the sluggish current, conveying in its crackling embers and terrific heat a terrible threat to the ships below. It was a fire-raft, one hun-

dred and fifty feet long, piled with pine knots full of inflammable pitch, which the crafty Confederates had pushed off in the hope of destroying the vessels their guns seemed unable to damage.

As they saw the huge bonfire bearing down upon them, a panic seized many of the sailors. It was only by the most heroic conduct that the officers of the imperiled Union vessels quieted them. Hastily drawing their anchors, and under good discipline, the ships crowded to one side, and the raft passed harmlessly by, although its heat blistered the paint of some of the nearest. Other fire-rafts followed—rafts even larger, piled higher with combustibles smeared with turpentine, flaming dangerously far out on either side as the wind would catch erratically into their mass. Some of these would surely have ignited the Union craft had not sailors gone up ahead to meet them in small boats, and bravely towed them aside at the expense of scorched faces and hands.

On the third night of the bombardment Farragut sent out his fleet captain, Henry H. Bell, on a dangerous mission. With two gunboats—the *Itasca* and the *Pinola*—Bell was to break through the barrier of Confederate schooners and heavy chains thrown across the river directly below the forts. The enterprise was one of great danger, for the gunboats would be obliged to do their work within easy range of the shore

works as well as the enemy craft, yet neither Captain Caldwell of the *Itasca,* nor Captain Crosby of the *Pinola* hesitated, and their crews accepted the undertaking with cheers.

However, no sooner had Captain Caldwell gallantly run up alongside of one of the hulks supporting the chains, and boarded her preparatory to slipping the chains and firing her, than they were slipped by an over-zealous sailor without his knowledge, the hulk's anchorage gave way, and both craft drifted aground under the forts.

In this dangerous position, and under a tremendous fire, the *Itasca* was obliged to remain until the *Pinola* came to her aid. Then she backed out, and still undaunted, Captain Caldwell ran his gunboat up the river through the gap that had been made in the chains. After going some distance he turned about, and bore down at full speed upon the portion of the barrier that still remained. His bow caught the chains, lifted them three or four feet out of water, and then broke them. He and Captain Crosby then rejoined the fleet below.

On the night of the sixth day Captain Caldwell once more went up the river, to see if the gap were still open. Finding it so, he returned and reported the welcome news to Admiral Farragut, who had decided the following night to be a propitious one for making a dash past the Confederate works and craft.

In the meantime careful preparations for the undertaking had been made. The hulls of the Union ships had been smeared with mud out of the river bed, to make them less visible, the decks were whitewashed so that objects on them could be seen by the sailors at night in the absence of lights, bags of sand and rolls of sail protected the exposed machinery and important ship's parts, and all the higher spars and unnecessary rigging were sent ashore. Force-pumps and engine hose were made ready, ladders were thrown over the sides to assist the carpenter's mates in stopping chance shot holes, tubs of water to extinguish possible fires were placed on deck, while grapnels were placed in the small boats in readiness for boarding an enemy craft.

At last the looked-for night—the 24th—settled down. The last rays of light showed the Union ships quiet and peaceful, as on other nights, to the Confederates. But under the sham tranquility Northern feet and hands fretted for the action that was so near, and brains were far busier than ever before.

As the moon rose, full and clear, about half-past three, it found the whole fleet under way. Silently the ships steamed up toward the forts; but already the unusual sounds had been detected by the sharp ears of the foe lookouts, and the Confederates were ready to receive them. Bonfire

after bonfire began to blaze up from different parts of the shore line; fire-rafts added their conflagration to the scene; almost every inch of the watercourse in the neighborhood was illumined with the intensity of day.

Farragut's heart sank for a moment. He saw that the run could no longer be made in secret; that whatever was to be done must be accomplished in open view of the Southerners. As for retreating, he never once thought of that.

In single file the Union ships approached the gap that had been made in the line of old hulks. As they did so their mortar-schooners opened up a heavy fire upon the forts. Leading the three divisions was the little *Cayuga.* When she had come abreast of them the forts opened a terrific fusillade upon her. The air was at once filled with shells and other explosives, which almost blinded her pilot in the forecastle as he tried to see his way. He turned in close under the walls of Fort St. Philip, which caused most of the intense enemy fire to pass through his rigging. Although this was badly shot up, the hull was hardly touched.

After passing the last battery, and thinking himself clear, Lieutenant Perkins, the pilot, looked back for some of his sister ships. Seeing none, he was greatly alarmed, thinking they must all have been sunken in front of the forts. Be-

lieving himself alone, the plucky commander of the *Cayuga* nevertheless steamed on ahead, straight into the eleven gunboats of the foe that began to bear down upon him. It seemed sheer suicide—an act of madness.

Three of the Confederate steamers attacked the *Cayuga* simultaneously, and attempted to board her. But when the nearest was within thirty feet, the little ship trained her eleven-inch gun upon her, and crippled her so badly that she was set afire, and had to run ashore, where she soon burned to the ground. The second enemy hauled off after a shot from the *Cayuga's* Parrot gun had lodged in her bow.

Only one was left. It was decided to board this ship; but just as the Northern sailors rushed forward for the purpose, they saw the Union ship *Veruna* suddenly appear upon the scene, firing her guns rapidly into the Southerner, who precipitately retreated.

With this timely assistance, the *Cayuga* was saved just in the nick of time, the other Confederate vessels holding off and giving their undivided attention to the newcomer. As for the *Veruna,* her recklessness was to be wondered at. Impetuously she steamed in among the enemy craft, discharging her weapons with such effective aim that soon the foe were beating away up the river. Unsupported, the audacious *Veruna* took up the

pursuit; but in her tracks, hidden in the lurid darkness, steamed another enemy after her—the Confederate gunboat, *Governor Moore*. Cunningly this ship hoisted at her masthead a white light, with a red one at her peak,—the distinguishing lights of the Union vessels—thinking to deceive the *Veruna* into believing she was followed by a friend, should she happen to detect the steamer in her wake.

Quite unaware of his rearward danger, Lieutenant Kennon, of the *Governor Moore,* raced under full steam after the fugitive. Slowly he gained. At last he ran her down. Hauling in his Union lights, he opened fire, and the duel that ensued was furious. Twice the *Governor Moore* rammed the Union ship; the last time she began to fill with water. But still undaunted, she threw three shells into the vitals of her larger antagonist. This set fire to the Confederate, who drew off, only to surrender to another Union gunboat which had come swiftly forward during the progress of the fight. Ffteen minutes later the *Veruna* sank.

Meanwhile, at the forts and directly above them, the scene beggars description. All that can be said is that everything was in the utmost confusion and wildest excitement. Blinded by the smoke of the guns, one of the Union vessels fired a broadside into a friend instead of the

enemy. Shot and shell were whizzing through the air in almost every direction; the night was horrible with every conceivable sound of mortal combat—harsh cries of man, harsh plunge of projectile in the waters, harsh thud and tear of destructive shot against giving timbers, harsh grunt of steam on pursuing and pursued vessels.

In passing the forts the larger ships stopped for a few moments and played their powerful batteries upon the crumbling walls, receiving a heavy fire in return. The lighter ships, however, scudded by without stopping, although they let fly showers of grape and shrapnel in the operation. The whole of the first division cleared the line of hulks and forts successfully in this manner.

Then came the center division, composed of three large ships—the *Hartford,* the *Richmond,* and the *Brooklyn.* The previous firing had filled the air with dense clouds of smoke, making the way almost impenetrable for those following behind the first vessels. Barely had the *Hartford,* bearing Farragut, come abreast of the fortifications, than a fire-raft came down the river directly toward her. In avoiding this danger she ran aground under the batteries of Fort St. Philip, in much the same position as the *Cayuga* had previously occupied. This time, however, the guns of the enemy works were lowered, and

as she lay there, helpless, the flagship was subjected to a withering fire. "We seemed to be breathing flame rather than air," said Farragut afterward.

The *Hartford* retaliated as well as she could with her own batteries. In the midst of her torture, a Confederate tug boldly guided the fire-raft up alongside, and in an instant the flames had communicated themselves to the Union ship. By the hardest kind of exertion, the fire brigade of the vessel managed to quench the blaze on shipboard, and push off the fire-raft with pikes as the ship's guns bellowed forth and sank the audacious tug. A few minutes later, to the joy of all, her struggling engines succeeded in backing the *Hartford* out into deep water. She headed round up-stream again, and followed through the gap in the hulks after the other Union ships.

Altogether fourteen of the Union craft passed clear of the Confederate obstructions, only one being lost—the reckless *Veruna*. The wonderful feat had been accomplished. Farragut had brought his fleet of wooden vessels past the formidable forts and equally formidable river obstacles with only a loss of one, and thirty-seven men killed and a hundred and fifty wounded.

All day of the 24th the fleet anchored off the Quarantine Station to review damage and make

repairs. On the following morning they steamed up the river to English Turn, where the two Confederate river batteries of Chalmette and McGehee were quickly silenced.

## THE CAPTURE OF NEW ORLEANS

When the inhabitants of New Orleans heard of the approach of the Union fleet under Farragut their consternation and dismay knew no bounds. News had come of the entrance of the enemy into the mouth of the Mississippi, but they had the utmost faith in the ability of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and their supporting watercraft, to put a summary stop to further advance.

Meanwhile, as the Union fleet neared New Orleans, they found their progress greatly impeded by all kinds of wreckage sent down from above to interfere with their movement. Worthless old scows and ships loaded with tiers of burning cotton-bales were frequently met floating down stream. As the invaders came within sight of the city itself, they saw that the levee was an object of desolation. Ships, cotton, coal, lumber, and warehouses were all in one common blaze, and the ingenuity of the Union officers was taxed to the limit to avoid the conflagration when they reached it.

After three days of parley, Farragut sent a force of two hundred and fifty Marines with two howitzers, under the command of Fleet-Captain Bell, to the City Hall. Before this they drew up, and trained the guns on the front of the building. Rapidly a great crowd had gathered back of them, and angry shouts and protestations filled the air when two Union officers went calmly upstairs and pulled down the State flag and ran up in its place the Stars-and-Stripes. In this manner New Orleans was forced to bow to the iron will of Admiral Farragut.

In the meantime the garrisons of Forts Jackson and St. Philip had mutinied. Taking advantage of the confusion among the Confederates, Commander Porter, who had stayed behind the main fleet with his mortar-schooners, made a fresh attack and succeeded in capturing the works. The defending enemy craft were also taken, and Farragut had these sent down the river for the troops of General Butler who, it will be remembered, was to follow him with a body of soldiers. Several of the ironclad rams, on which the Confederates had placed the greatest hopes, were destroyed in the general cleaning-up process that was now going on along the river between its mouth and New Orleans. The principal ship of this class—the *Mississippi*—was burned by the Southerners themselves, and came floating down

stream in a mass of flames as Captain Lee started up the river to seize her.

The fall of the Queen City was the knell to Confederate hopes on the mighty Mississippi. After the surrender the panic extended far upstream. The two forts at Carrollton, eight miles above, were abandoned, the guns spiked, before the Union boats appeared there.

Farragut was now in favor of returning down the Mississippi, and making an immediate attack on Mobile. But the Government held to its original intention of having the fleet continue on up the river to join the Union flotilla under Flag-Officer Davis, which then lay nine hundred miles above the mouth of the stream. In vain Farragut tried to convince his superiors in Washington that his force was inadequate for such an undertaking; that the high bluffs above New Orleans were strongly fortified in many places, and would require a military operation to reduce them. To make matters more unpromising for him, the waters of the river were beginning to fall, leaving many bars where there was not sufficient depth to float his ships even now. If he should succeed in going above Vicksburg, he saw no way of getting down again until the freshets of the following spring.

At two o'clock in the morning of the 28th of June, the squadron of eleven ships got under way,

and began to stem the roily current. The mortar-schooners had come up, and it was only a short time before these found much to do, as well as the other ships, in forcing their way along. The mortars opened up first on the earthworks, and then the gunboats got in their broadsides. In reply, the ridge of bluffs seemed a living sheet of fire, as their batteries thundered from one end to the other, and grape and shrapnel and ball came cutting down in the midst of the ships.

The *Hartford* passed at slow speed, discharging her guns with deliberation and splendid effect, although the elevated works of the enemy were not an easy mark on account of their angle. From time to time, as she found herself forging too far ahead of her consorts, she would pause to allow them to catch up.

On one occasion Farragut was watching the fight from his favorite position in the mizzen rigging, when the captain of the gun on the poop-deck asked him to get down as he wished to direct his gun near that spot. Hardly had the Admiral left his post when an enemy shot cut away the whole mizzen rigging just above his head.

The batteries of the outlying defenses were silenced more readily than Farragut had dared to hope. In two hours the first divisions of the fleet had passed; but owing to a misunderstanding of orders, the third division dropped down the river.

Proceeding on his course, the great seaman finally joined Davis's flotilla a few miles above Vicksburg, to which Davis had come after a brilliant victory at Memphis.

As the combined fleets lay at anchor, news reached them that the Confederate ram *Arkansas,* which had been especially built for the destruction of the Union squadrons, was in Yazoo River. Two ships were at once ordered away on a reconnoitering expedition. About six miles up the Yazoo they met the ironclad coming at full speed. Realizing that they were unfit to make any kind of a fight against the monster, the Union vessels retreated, keeping up a continual fire from their stern guns until they had gained such a distance that their shots no longer reached the armored target.

Warned of the approach of the *Arkansas,* the Union fleet made hasty preparations to meet her. As their fires were low, there was no time to get up steam, so attention was given entirely to the guns.

Sweeping grandly into the Mississippi, the ram came downstream under full pressure. Past the line of Yankee ships she puffed, firing her guns in the act, her screw propeller churning the water into swirling eddies in her wake. The Union broadsides, trained on the impudent craft, thun-

dered viciously; and their projectiles rained against her metal jacket in a crashing staccato that sounded like a thousand imps hammering a boiler. But all the grape and shrapnel in that fusillade could do was to puncture her smoke-stack like a sieve and tear her flag away; bullets striking elsewhere merely flattened out or broke in bits on her plate.

Making no effort to turn about and attack her enemy, the *Arkansas* continued on to Vicksburg, where she sought protection under the guns of the fort. Three weeks later, however, she was to meet her end. Then, in attempting to reach Baton Rouge, her machinery broke down, she ran aground at the mercy of the Union ships, and her commander set her afire.

Meanwhile Farragut had again passed the fortifications of Vicksburg with his ships. He continued on downstream, finally arriving at New Orleans. Here, on the 12th of August, he received his commission as rear-admiral, and was the first officer in the United States Navy to hoist his admiral's flag at the main.

As most of his vessels were now in need of repairs and provisions, he steamed down to the Gulf of Mexico, where, in the harbor of Pensacola, his fleet lay refitting through the remaining summer months.

## PORT HUDSON AND MOBILE BAY

DURING Farragut's stay at Pensacola reports arrived that the Confederates were strengthening the defenses at Vicksburg and Port Hudson, the only two important strategic positions on the Mississippi still held by them. Believing that it would soon be advisable tc make a concerted attack on these points, the Admiral returned to New Orleans, from whence he could better organize his forces and make a quick dash into the enemy. Before his ships could move upstream, however, it would be necessary to wait for higher water and the arrival of troops which the Government was sending, under General Banks, to his aid.

At last the long-expected army put in an appearance, but was not ready for its part in the program till late in February. Then, when General Banks had assured Farragut that his soldiers only awaited the word to move forward, he made his plans for an immediate start.

Leaving the soldiers to constitute a land force, and move along the shores parallel with his squadron for attack in the rear of the enemy batteries that were to be met, Admiral Farragut weighed anchor on the 14th of March and steamed up to within seven miles of Port Hudson, where his ships anchored off Profit's Island.

His enterprise was a most difficult one. Port Hudson was situated in a sharp bend of the Mississippi. The high bluffs on the east side of the stream, covering the approach of the town for a mile and a half from below, were bristling with powerful open and masked batteries which threatened destruction to any ship passing them. To add to the difficulties of navigation the strong current that swept around the curve of the river, formed a deep channel under the bluffs, while on the opposite side were dangerous shoals and baffling eddies. Thus, if vessels coming upstream did not place themselves directly under the fire of the defenses on the elevations, they must attempt to run the gauntlet through shallow water that would be very likely to send them aground, a helpless prey to the long-range guns of the foe.

Farragut's squadron counted four warships and three gunboats, supplemented with a number of mortar-schooners. The latter were to take a position in advance of the other craft, and were to keep up a heavy fire to divert as much attention as possible, while the remaining ships worked by. Each of the latter, excepting the *Mississippi,* was ordered to lash a gunboat to her port side, so that in case of injury or accident she could be towed by her consort to a place of safety.

After darkness had settled down over the river that night, a red light suddenly appeared at the

stern of the *Hartford,* as a signal for the squadron to form in line behind her. Answering lights soon showed that all were in position, and then the flag-ship slowly steamed upstream. Nothing but the soft *chug-chug* of the exhaust pipes and the faint *clink-clank* of engine parts could be heard, without it were the swish of curling waters cut by the sharp bows of the Union flotilla. On deck the men went about their tasks silently, muffling every operation they could. The very tension seemed to portend the sudden breaking of a terrific storm.

Undeterred, the little Union squadron crept steadily forward; but now every man was at his station before the guns, waiting for the order of Farragut to pull the lanyards. All at once the shore opposite them was thrown out into bold relief by a great flare of flame; there instantly followed a thundering crash of cannon, and shot spattered into the water all around the Yankees, sang through their rigging, and cut down some of the brave fellows themselves.

Quick came the reply from the squadron. Guided by the flare of the enemy guns, their own were trained like lightning, and heavy reports and great clouds of smoke rolled upward from the river level.

A little later so close did the flag-ship run to the shore that a Confederate officer in command of

one of the batteries, seeing Farragut and two junior officers standing on the poop-deck within pistol range, stepped beyond the parapet for a moment and leveled his pistol and pulled the trigger. Fortunately for the Union men it missed fire. Seizing another pistol, the Southerner was in the act of making good his ill luck, when a musket aboard the flag-ship flashed, and he toppled over. Farragut, who had just seen his danger, turned quickly. It was to discover his own disobedient young son standing near, with excited face and a gun from which the smoke still curled!

The roar of the mortars, the shells passing like meteors across the heavens, the guns flashing and blazing until along their port sides a broad stripe of fire seemed to have been painted upon every one of the ships; the fitful glare of the bonfires on shore; the crashing sounds of battle, and the heavy interludes of brief silence; the dense clouds of powder-tainted smoke settling down upon the water and vessels, then rising—all this made a scene young Royall never forgot to his dying day.

Up in the mizzen-top of the *Hartford* the pilot, on whose coolness depended the safe passage of the ship, had stationed himself with one end of a speaking-tube whose outlet was at the steersman's wheel far below. On account of the low-lying

smoke the latter could see nothing himself. As the pilot, high over his head, would call out "Starboard!" or "Port!" he made the proper turn of his wheel to avoid the perils of the passage.

Finally the *Hartford* and her consort steamed around the bend in the Mississippi past the last of the enemy's defenses. Dropping anchor in safety above Port Hudson, Farragut looked anxiously back downstream for the rest of his squadron. Not a friendly outline could he see in the darkness beyond; but in that gulf of smoke and night he could distinctly hear the heavy rumble of guns, and presently could see, in a sudden glare of light above the rolling smoke-clouds, the masthead of a ship that he knew to be the *Mississippi,* and which appeared to be on fire.

Meanwhile below the flag-ship, everything was confusion and disaster. The other Union vessels continued to slowly grope their way upstream, hammered every yard of the way by the shot of the breastworks on the bluffs. The *Richmond* managed to reach the bend without great mishap, but just as she thought herself out of range, a Confederate ball struck the steampipe and upset both safety-valves. With her pipes hissing like a thousand geese, she found her steam escaping so fast that she could no longer make headway against the current, and was forced to drift out of action.

The *Mississippi* was at the lower end of the line of Yankee ships, and the last to reach the treacherous bend. As she came abreast of this, she grounded on a bar. Every effort was made to back her off, but unavailingly. For the larger part of an hour she lay exposed to the galling cross-fire of three nearby Confederate defenses, answering the while in splendid manner with her own guns. Then realizing the impossibility of saving his ship, and wishing to save the lives of his crew to the uttermost, the commander of the ship had her put to the torch, and in the small boats her crew pulled away. In a short time the fine old vessel was wrapped in flames from the water's edge to her maintop, a seething furnace. Presently she blew up with a terrific report, scattering fragments of her once stately form in every direction.

Admiral Farragut thus found himself alone upon the hostile river, with only the companionship of the gunboat lashed to his ship's side. Below him lay Port Hudson; above was Vicksburg —both towns filled with Yankee-hating Southerners. Surmising that the remainder of his squadron had probably been unable to get by the foe's river defenses, Farragut got into communication with General Grant's land forces, who were in the vicinity, and in this way managed to revictual and recoal his vessel. Thereupon, for

a couple of weeks, he patrolled the river between Port Hudson, silencing the weak batteries he encountered.

Upon arriving near Port Hudson again in early April he became very anxious to communicate with the rest of his ships, if there were any left below him. It was impossible to send dispatches by land, as the enemy was alert to every suspicious movement, so when Edward Gabaudan, the Admiral's secretary, offered to proceed alone by way of the river, Farragut assented.

This undertaking of Gabaudan's was one of the most dangerous character, filled with perils from stream and enemy alike, but the young Yankee did not flinch, even after Farragut, in the kindness of his great heart, pointed them out to him. Providing himself with a pistol and a paddle, he crawled one night at dusk into a small dugout, which his associates then covered with boughs, and was pushed off into the swirling current among the numerous logs which in those days were continually floating down the mighty Mississippi, on their way to the Gulf.

After an exciting trip he reached Richmond. A solitary rocket darted up into the air at this point, bursting into a shower of fiery sparks against the dark sky. It was the signal to Farragut, a few miles above, that his daring secre-

tary had succeeded in passing the dangerous batteries of the enemy, and would immediately deliver his dispatches.

The following night the watching Admiral detected other rockets arising from the vicinity of Richmond, and with a sigh of relief read in them the message that all his squadron except the *Mississippi* were waiting his commands in the lower waters.

Shortly after the fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson, Farragut turned over the entire command of the river fleet above New Orleans to Rear-Admiral Porter, and about the first week of August sailed for New York in the *Hartford*.

The successful opening of the Mississippi now allowed the Federal Government to turn its attention to the extensive coastline of the Gulf. Next to New Orleans, Mobile was the most important of the Confederate ports, having become a very busy shipping station for the supplies of the southern district. An attack on Mobile, therefore, became the next naval project worth while for the Yankees.

In January, 1864, Farragut was once more sent to the Gulf, this time to take the offensive against the city he had wanted to attack months before, but which the Naval Board had erroneously thought unwise to tackle. In the meantime, the

foe had greatly increased the defenses of Mobile, making the task of capturing it a most herculean one, to say the least.

For six weary months Farragut now had to lay in the waters of the Gulf on blockade duty, while his fleet was being assembled and the Confederates made their position stronger. At length, on the night of the 5th of August, the whole Union fleet, stripped for action, lay just outside the harbor of Mobile. Everything was in complete readiness, from ship to man, for the fight that the Yankees knew could be nothing else than a desperate one.

By this time the defenses of the Bay were most formidable and of a character to carry dread to the heart of almost any attacking force. The only deep-water channel for the passage of ships lay directly under the guns of Fort Morgan. Across the entrance, from Fort Gaines to the edge of the channel, the enemy had driven a double line of huge stakes, and in the channel itself they had made defensive measures doubly sure by sinking a triple row of torpedoes.

Within the harbor, and above Fort Morgan, lay the Confederate squadron, commanded by Admiral Buchanan. It was small in numbers, consisting only of three gunboats and the ironclad *Tennessee* (an improvement on the *Merrimac,* which we have met previously), the latter

being the most powerful craft of its kind in the South. But backed up as it was with the strong additional defenses named, this flotilla was considered fully ample by its supporters to protect the city.

Against this array of obstacles Admiral Farragut stood ready to fling a fleet of twenty-one wooden vessels and four monitors, the latter patterned after the famous "cheese-box on a raft" creation of Ericsson's. Lashed together, two by two, the vessels were to sail in pairs. A large man-of-war, the *Brooklyn,* headed the line, Farragut's flag-ship, the *Hartford,* coming next.

Just at daylight the next morning the Union ships started forward. Farragut had taken his stand in the rigging close under the maintop, from whence he could see clearly the course of the coming fight. As they approached the enemy defenses, the *Tecumseh* let fly two shots at one of the Confederate gunboats, and was the first to attempt the crossing of the dangerous line of submarine mines. Gaining these after some hard fighting, and crushing a passage through the stakes, she was unlucky enough to strike a torpedo. There was a great explosion, the water under her bow spurted high, and the stricken ship plunged by the head to the bottom of the Bay, with her colors still flying.

Meanwhile the other ships were being engaged

one by one with the Southern craft. The two gunboats of the enemy fired with incredible accuracy, and were so quick in their movements that for a brief space of time the Union vessels were thrown into confusion. They backed upon one another, owing to their bunched order, and became entangled in what seemed an inextricable mess. To add to their distress this happened in a part of the waters where they were exposed to the full brunt of the enemy fire, both from water and land.

There is no telling how this situation would have resulted had it not been for the prompt decision and prompt action of the Admiral himself. Like Dewey at Manila, he solved the problem at the critical moment when a moment's further delay would have resulted disastrously, snatching victory out of the very flames of defeat.

Seeing that the *Brooklyn,* which had been following the ill-fated *Tecumseh* when the latter went down, was wavering before the line of submarine mines, Farragut sent up the signal, "What's the trouble?"

The answer came back, "Torpedoes ahead."

Then followed the gallant Admiral's famous reply: "Damn the torpedoes! Go ahead. Four bells [full speed]!"

Still the *Brooklyn* hesitated apparently. At least she was so slow that the *Hartford* swept

past her and took the lead. On went the flagship, under full head of steam, lashed by the iron hand and indomitable will of her fearless commander. Straight on—right into the first line of touchy, ugly, death-dealing torpedoes, any one of which, should she brush it at all, would have let loose its titanic energy and ended her career then and there.

A pallor crept over the suntanned faces of her crew. Men who would have faced death unflinchingly from a cutlass or bullet blanched at thought of being blown up by hundreds of pounds of powder that they could not see or locate. They glanced at their commander. Noting the stern, determined look upon his face, their white faces flushed with shame—and they were men again, real men; the kind of men who, entirely forgetful of self, have saved many a nation and many a cause from being ground under the heel of defeat.

In a silence like death, the *Hartford* passed safely through that path of deadly mines. Behind her, following her course unerringly, knowing that to deviate meant disaster, her sister ships also came through the lane, the constant targets for the missiles of the enemy from the forts. Already the Confederate ships had been captured or put to flight. Now the entire Union squadron came to anchor around their admired

flag-ship in the upper part of the Bay, and the cheering of the crews rang out over the waters in all directions.

Upon taking inventory of damage it was found that the vessels, while pretty badly torn of rigging, were all in very fair shape, and while a good many men had suffered wounds of a minor character, a surprisingly small number had met death or serious injuries. As the crew of the *Hartford* worked clearing up the decks, a cry suddenly arose.

"The ram! The ram's coming!"

Looking, they saw the ironclad of the enemy, which had taken refuge under the batteries of Fort Morgan, coming boldly and rashly forward, with the evident intention of attacking the squadron single-handed.

Instantly the order was given by Farragut to treat the ironclad to some of her own medicine; and as she came up at full speed, his ship came at her, bow on, and gave the astonished *Tennessee* such a bunting as she had never dreamed of. Blow after blow was given, while the broadsides of the Union vessels poured against her a merciless but harmless storm of grape and shrapnel.

Not until the monitors of the squadron joined in the fracas did the Southerner seem to show any ill effects of the abuse she was receiving, putting up a wonderfully good fight. Harassed

by these, at last her rudder-chains were shot away, her smokestack was torn off, and she began to leak from giving timbers. Admiral Buchanan, who had commanded her, was wounded in the leg. At last, badly battered and crippled, she ran up the white flag.

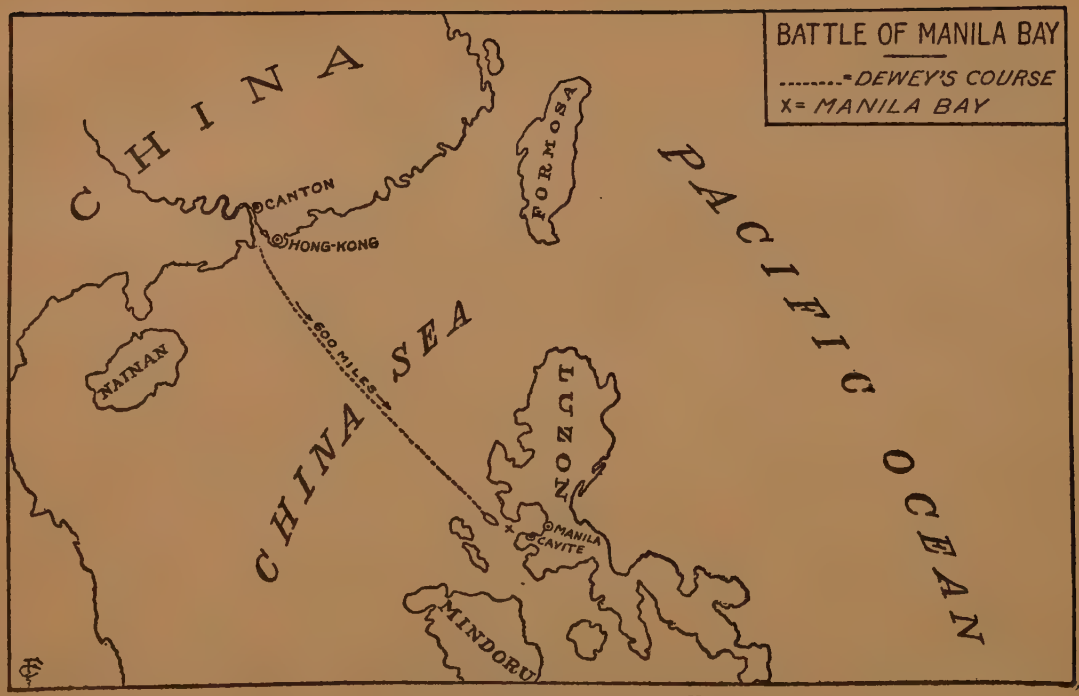
In this manner the great fight virtually ended, for the forts soon capitulated, and Farragut gained mastery of the Bay.

## XI

## DEWEY AT MANILA BAY

The sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day;
The sea-birds screamed as they wheeled round—
And then came the harsh note of battle sound.

—*Southey.*




THE BATTLE OF MANILA BAY

## Dewey at Manila Bay

STRANGE as it may seem, the first blow delivered by the United States in behalf of Cuba was struck on the other side of the globe, in Asiatic waters. This thump was so hard that it caused the eyes of the nations of Europe to pop wide open. To the people back home it brought immense satisfaction and a joy quite unspeakable.

Before the Spanish-American War the chief colonial possessions of Spain, excepting Cuba and Porto Rico, were the Philippine Islands. This group, of some twelve hundred separate bodies of sea-surrounded land, lies off the southeast coast of China. The largest island, Luzon, is about the size of the State of Kentucky. The Philippines had an aggregate population of perhaps seven millions people, chiefly Malays, though many of the inhabitants were of Spanish blood. The office-holders and tax-collectors were, of course, Spaniards.

Squarely upon the natural highways of Oriental trade, the Islands were of enormous commercial importance, owing to the value of

their many mineral and vegetable products. In addition, their safe harbors and supplies of coal rendered them of great military importance.

Spanish misrule in the form of merciless oppression, cruelty, and extortion, finally festered the heretofore patient and uncomplaining natives into a violent insurrection—one scarcely less bitter than that then going on in Cuba against the Spaniards. Led by Aguinaldo—a young Filipino of considerable sagacity and a fair education—thousands of irate natives became engaged, in 1897, in a bloody warfare against the authority of Spain. This had caused the Spaniards to fortify heavily the capital, Manila, which is situated at the head of Manila Bay, thirty-five miles from the open waters of the Pacific. Strong forts were erected at the entrance to the Bay, and furnished with the best modern guns Spain could procure. At Cavite, on the right side, as one enters, was established the government arsenal and naval station. In the city of Manila itself an efficient army was quartered.

Immediately at the prospect of war with the United States both the force in Manila and the defenses along the Bay were strengthened, while a considerable Spanish fleet gathered to protect the forts.

Under instructions from his Government at

Washington, Commodore George Dewey had gathered at Hong-Kong—about six hundred miles from the Philippines—the greater part of the United States warships then in the Pacific Ocean. By the 19th of April, 1898,—the day Congress passed its resolutions of war—the fleet consisted of the *Olympia,* the *Boston,* the *Concord,* the *Raleigh,* and the *Petrel.* On that day the jackies began to put on them their war-uniforms of slate color, wielding their brushes as fast as they could. Three days later, while this work of painting was still under way, the *Baltimore* came into port from Yokohama. She had no thought of losing her part in the expedition, so, with characteristic energy and speed, her officers and sailors in the following forty-eight hours had put her in drydock, and scraped, repaired, painted, coaled, provisioned, and otherwise made her ready for the grim business of war.

Everything was ship-shape by the 24th, and the Pacific fleet headed away from Hong-Kong with bands playing and cheers ringing after them from the American and English residents of the Chinese port. Commodore Dewey led the procession in the battleship *Olympia.* Accompanying the fleet were the revenue-cutter *Hugh McCulloch,* as a dispatch-boat, and two merchant

vessels carrying ten thousand tons of coal. On the decks and in the tops were seventeen hundred lusty, strong-hearted American boys—as fine a lot of adventure-loving young seamen as ever roamed the seas.

And yet the number of Spanish vessels in Manila Bay exceeded considerably the number of American craft going to meet them. Most of the latter, too, were cruisers, having far less armament power than battleships. While they would have an equal number of enemy ships of their type to face, the smaller craft would be largely outnumbered. With this situation against them, the American vessels also would have to contend against the formidable Spanish forts at the mouth of the harbor, the batteries and arsenal at Cavite, further in, submerged mines, and the fortifications and troops of the city of Manila. Despite these very real perils, the American tars sailed on with the greatest enthusiasm.

It was on Saturday morning, the 30th of April, that they sighted the Island of Luzon. A suppressed excitement ran throughout the fleet; everybody was astir, and eyes searched the distant waters for a speck of land which at that time only the officers with their powerful glasses could discern. As the ships sped on, the decks were sanded, and preparations for conflict renewed,

everything that might catch fire in battle being tossed overboard or put in the hold.

No sight of the Spanish ships was caught that day, and the officers became certain that they were harboring in the calm waters of the Bay, safely behind the network of submarine torpedoes and under the wing of the Spanish fortifications. At five o'clock the different captains were called aboard the *Olympia* for consultation and final orders. It was decided that the hour of twelve, midnight, would be best for making a dash past the forts at the entrance to the harbor, in order to be ready for an engagement at daylight. The problem was to find the enemy just at daybreak and not before.

The early part of the night was cloudy and dark, ideal for the purpose in view. No lights were allowed except one at the stern of each vessel, covered on all sides save the rear, for the guidance of the ship that was following, and no word was to be spoken or movement made unless by the orders of the commanders. At eleven o'clock the crews were called to quarters to be ready for an emergency, and at midnight the ships, in single column with the *Olympia* leading, commenced the perilous passage.

The forts at the entrance of the Bay were upon Corregidor Island, six hundred feet above the water level; and at El Fraile, on the opposite

side. The channel on one side is one mile wide; on the other, five miles wide. The entrance of the Americans was made by the wider passage, and between the forts.

As the fleet went by the island, a rocket shot up into the sky from the fort on the hill, showing that they had been discovered. Almost instantly other rockets flashed along the shore line. It was supposed that these warnings of the enemy would be followed by an immediate attack from the Krupp guns of the shore batteries, but such was not the case. All was silence. Evidently these defenses, confident in the prowess of the Spanish fleet to annihilate the invaders, thought they would relegate the task of destroying the Americans to their own vessels.

Thus the Yankee ships moved forward till opposite the second fort, which was situated upon a small island near the shore. This defense proved more aggressive than those preceding it. There was a bright flash in the darkness surrounding it, the heavy boom of a gun, the scream of a shell overhead. Another, and still another shot came screeching through the air toward the procession of American ships.

At the last shot, the *Raleigh,* which was third in line, replied with a five-inch shell that sent mortar flying, and the *Concord* and the *Boston,* coming next, each in turn opened fire. The

shells from the shore batteries fell wide of the mark. On the other hand, with the first enemy flash the Yankee gunners had the spot well marked, and presently placed a six-inch shell so accurately that it penetrated the defense, killing outright one officer and forty-one men, and silencing the battery completely.

The night wore away slowly as the fleet advanced in cautious formation, feeling their way along the unknown passage toward the city. Toward morning the moon broke through the clouds. All the time the finishing touches for action with the enemy ships were being applied with energy. The men were instructed once more in their duties, the decks were again sanded, the boats were covered with canvas to prevent their being splintered by flying shell, the ammunition hoists were wound with cable-chains, the guns were gone over very carefully, the surgeons gave their final directions to their assistants, the carpenters saw that their mates stood ready with emergency repairs, and in fact everything was done that American wit and industry could do to get ready for serious action.

The lights of Manila came in sight early, and were used by Dewey as beacons of guidance in the forward movement. At dawn the fleet was about four miles from the city, and breakfast of hardtack and coffee was served at once to the hungry crews.

It was a Sunday—that day of peace with civilized mankind when, singular as it is, most of the world's important battles seem to have been fought to a conclusion. At a little past five the forts on the Manila shore, and at Cavite, just opposite, began to open up; but their projectiles fell a half-mile short of the fleet. No reply was made; Commodore Dewey, on the bridge of the *Olympia,* had his plans, and nothing could divert him. While the dispatch-boat *McCulloch* stopped in the middle of the Bay, the cruisers passed on in single file, swung around to the right, and, under full steam, made straight toward the arsenal at Cavite and the Spanish fleet which could be seen anchored there.

By this time the fire from the forts and the enemy ships, each of the latter bearing aloft great battle-flags of red and gold, was very heavy, the reverberations from the powerful Spanish guns echoing and reëchoing across the waters of the Bay from headland to headland. But still their shells fell short. Either they were low of range, or their weapons were not of sufficient power to carry up.

The American gunners stood by their pieces with smiling, tense faces, as their ships pressed onward as straight as an arrow toward the enemy. Presently from the *Olympia* this signal was raised: "Fire as convenient." As restless

as every man was to discharge his piece, the officers still shook their heads. When the range-finder showed two miles, Dewey turned to the captain of his ship and said the historic words: "When you are ready you may fire, Mr. Gridley."

Captain Gridley, quite ready, quickly passed the order; and in a moment the eager gunners before the eight-inch guns in the forward turret of the flag-ship were aiming and discharging their pieces with thunderous roars which were but signals for a general storm of missiles from the other ships, all directed toward the vessels of the Spanish fleet in front of Cavite. Every port battery, within a few minutes, had unloosed its burden of deadly lead and iron. The air was full of shells and smoke. To give the gunners a better chance, the speed was slowed down.

As soon as all had passed the anchored Spanish ships, the line swung round, and returned slowly over the same course, this time firing the starboard batteries. Spouts of water could be seen flying up all about the Spaniards' ships as the shots fell in their midst. Suddenly, not more than eight hundred yards ahead of the *Olympia* there was a dull rumble below the sea, and a geyser shot up high in the air. A submarine mine had exploded prematurely—probably as the result of a wild enemy shot striking it.

At this juncture the Spanish flag-ship, the

*Reina Cristina,* slipped her mooring and charged directly at the *Olympia,* like a maddened panther. But the guns of all the fleet were instantly turned upon her, and the marksmanship of the cool-headed American gunners, used to hitting much more difficult targets, did not fail. In a few minutes the Spanish ship was in flames, with great holes torn in her hull and half her rigging shot away. Turning about with difficulty she attempted to flee back to her consorts. But even as she headed for shelter, the trained eye of a gunner on the *Olympia's* forward deck was glancing along his great steel pet; there was a heavy roar, and a terrible projectile struck the Spaniard's stern and crashed clear through, sweeping to the very bow, and dropping the captain and more than sixty of his men.

Admiral Montojo and his men escaped as best they could from the sinking ship in her boats, the former transferring his flag to the *Isla de Cuba.* But no sooner had he run up his admiral's emblem upon this ship than she immediately became the new target for the resistless American batteries. The result was, soon she too was burning and in a sinking condition. Angered almost to distraction the Spanish commander-in-chief once more had to find new quarters, whereupon he at once ordered two of his torpedo-destroyers to go out and do to the

*Olympia* what he himself had been unable to accomplish.

The Spanish destroyers, lying low in the water, going at great speed, soon come within seven hundred yards of the *Olympia.* She is in easy reach of the deadly torpedoes, and a big target; the Spanish gunners can hardly fail to get at least one into her. The dark eyes of the Spanish officers and crew glint with triumph. The captains put their lips to the speaking tubes to give the chief gunners the word to fire. But they are too late. Already the secondary batteries and rapid-fire guns of the Yankees are beginning to bark, and the well-aimed shot to strike the destroyers. From one of the latter there arises a great puff of white as an internal explosion shakes her from bow to stern; and she drops under the waves forever. The other Spaniard, sorely crippled, fires a tube hastily and the torpedo cuts a white line harmlessly across the bow of the *Olympia,* while the destroyer makes about and struggles frantically toward shore. There on the beach she will be found after all is over, pierced, shattered, and bloody.

Now the American fleet turn again and steam back to bring their guns to bear on the other side. This time it is the Spanish ships *Don Antonio de Ulloa* and *Castillo* which become the victims of their merciless aim; the enemy ships, frightfully torn, soon sink.

Although they ought to be tired out by this time, the Yankee gunners seem to be gaining in the precision of their fire, the accuracy of which is wonderful to behold—as if they were at target practice and in no danger themselves. The sniff of victory is in their nostrils; the remarkable triumph they are gaining lifts them above such a sordid weakness as exhaustion; the spirit continues the fight with sublime indifference to the whims of the physical being.

Presently, to the surprise of the rest of the fleet, the *Olympia* draws out of line. What is the matter? Has she been struck? Does she feel the necessity of immediate repairs? But no —as she comes near some of the ships in moving out, and their crews cheer her, and her own crew cheers as heartily back, every consort feels reassured. Now from her masthead flies the signal to withdraw and serve breakfast.

It is half-past seven, and the fight has raged for more than two hours. Even as the men gather round the tables to partake hungrily of food those on deck can see several enemy vessels burning, and a fire in the Arsenal. While the eating goes on, the officers hastily make a close inspection of their vessels, noting the damage done and the condition of the ammunition. The captains are called to the flag-ship, from whence they soon return with the cheering news

that not a man has been killed and only a half-dozen wounded. A great cheer goes up; and a greater one still, when announcement is made that the attack will be renewed and the battle fought to a finish without further delay.

Shortly before eleven o'clock the signal comes to advance once more. The plan of battle has been changed. The Spanish ships have been so badly used up that they are practically out of the fight. Now, instead of the American fleet moving up and down in front of the enemy forts and vessels, and firing as they go, orders are to go directly toward the ships, stop for range, then choose a mark and make sure that it is struck.

First goes the *Baltimore*. Her engines working at capacity, the black smoke fairly rolls from her stacks, and she trembles from end to end under the mighty impulse of her own mechanical power. In a short time she has almost disappeared in her smoke. Then her huge guns begin to thunder, followed, as she draws in, by the lighter and shriller staccato of her rapid-fire battery.

The men behind, on other decks, tremble eagerly as they await their turn. Now they watch the *Olympia,* which, twenty minutes later, takes up the trail of the *Baltimore*. Following, the *Boston* gets under way, with a cheer from her own and the other crews. Then the *Raleigh*

and the *Concord* drop in. Last to go forward is the little *Petrel.* But it is not through choice, you may well believe. Drawing less water than her consorts, this small ship runs close in under the frowning parapets of the fort, fires a furious broadside, wheels and fires the other, dashes nimbly away, returns and repeats the process—until the fort has been crumbled in many places and is seen to be in flames.

Meantime the sister ships of the "baby battleship,"—as she is lovingly dubbed—have not been idle. By one o'clock all the larger Spanish ships have been put out of action, and the remaining forts disabled or left burning. Five minutes later the little *Petrel,* dashing in once more, signals the Commodore that the enemy has struck his colors at Cavite and has raised a white flag.

The fight had now been completely won. The firing ceased, and the crews climbed the rigging to cheer and cheer again till they were hoarse the marvelous victory they had won seven thousand miles from any American soil. The exultation was all the more enthusiastic because no additional casualties had been endured in the second stage of action. As for the *Olympia,* she had been struck thirteen different times, and not one of the other vessels had entirely escaped, but the damage in every case was not very serious.

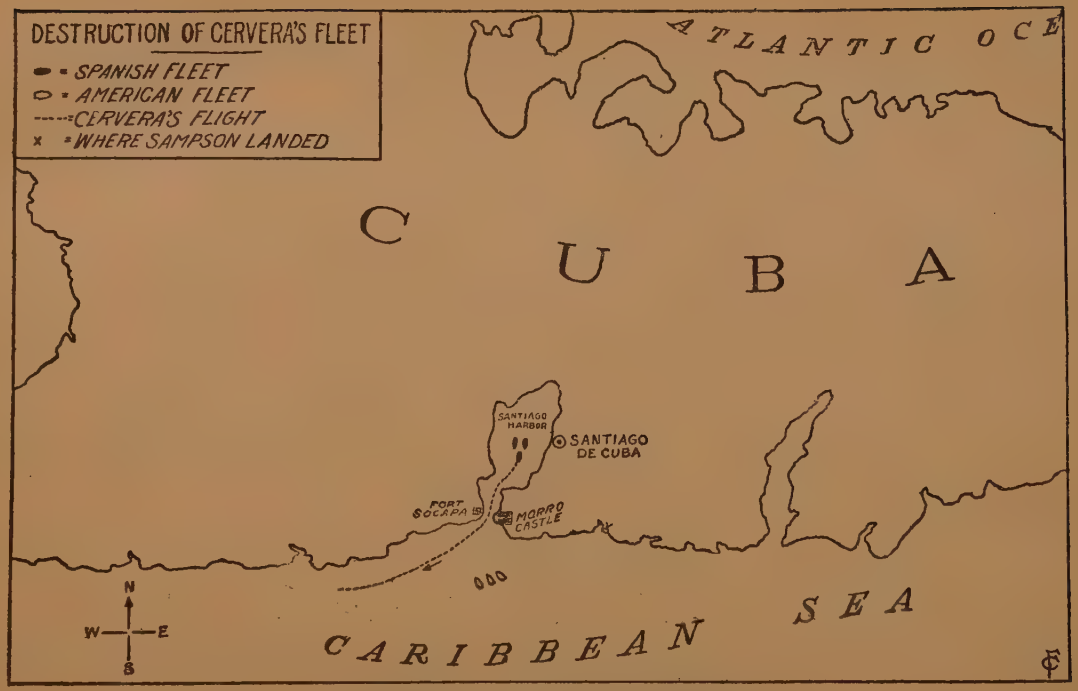
It was a battle in which scientific skill had had more to do with the result than any other factor. The Spaniards clearly showed a lack of the high training that had been the lot of the American seamen; while every one of the latter's shots seemed to find its mark, the projectiles of the enemy usually went wide.

## XII

## THE BATTLE OF SANTIAGO HARBOR

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
  Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks they gored her sides
  Like the horns of an angry bull.

—*Longfellow.*




THE BATTLE OF SANTIAGO HARBOR

# The Battle of Santiago Harbor

## HOBSON'S DARING EXPLOIT

When the blowing up of the United States battleship *Maine* precipitated a declaration of war, on April 21st, 1898, between America and Spain, the Atlantic squadron, under Rear-Admiral Sampson, immediately proceeded to the island of Cuba and stretched a cordon of blockading ships around it. A little later it was heard that the Spanish admiral, Cervera, had sailed from Spain with a formidable fleet. Taking his vessels with him, Sampson went forth to meet the enemy, but failing, finally returned to Cuba after a long and baffling search. It was only to find that while he had been in the neighborhood of Key West, and Commodore Schley had been watching the southern coast of the Island, Cervera had very neatly slipped into Santiago harbor with his ships.

There was nothing for the Americans to do now but make the best of the disappointing situation, and proceed to close up the neck of the bottle into which the Spanish admiral had chosen to take his fleet. By the last week of May both

American commanders were present. Schley's command embraced his flag-ship, the *Brooklyn,* the *Massachusetts,* the *Texas,* the *Iowa,* the *Marblehead,* the *Minneapolis,* the *Castine*—battleships and cruisers; and the torpedo-destroyer *Dupont.* He also had with him the auxiliary-cruiser *St. Paul,* the coaling-ship *Merrimac,* and several smaller craft. Sampson's flotilla comprised the flag-ship *New York,* battleship *Oregon,* cruiser *New Orleans,* several auxiliary vessels and torpedo-destroyers.

To make certain that there had been no mistake, and that all the Spanish ships were really in the harbor, Lieutenant Victor Blue made a daring reconnoissance. Braving the threatening guns of the formidable fort of Morro Castle at the head of the harbor, and risking a sniper's shot, Blue climbed one of the hills and counted one by one the enemy's vessels as they lay in the sheltered waters behind the protecting mines, about half way between the city of Santiago and the mouth of the bay. He presently returned in the small boat that had taken him, and reported five cruisers and two torpedo-destroyers.

The situation now was this: The Spanish fleet was indeed besieged; it might dash for liberty, but this was unlikely in view of the fact that the Yankee ships were more numerous and

individually as powerful in armament. On the the other hand the besiegers were unable to get in and force a quick conclusion, owing to the almost impregnable defenses of the enemy; there were the frowning battlements of Morro Castle, high on its cliff on the one side, and on the other the heavy battery of Socapa on lower ground; there were the deadly mines that stretched across the channel, just below the water level, which could not be threaded without disaster except by those who had the key to their location.

For several days the American ships bombarded the Spanish forts at the mouth of the harbor. But while Socapa was badly damaged, the elevation of Morro Castle was so great and its structure so massive that the hardest fire of the Yankees failed to destroy any of its protecting batteries.

Reluctantly the blockaders withdrew out of range, and Sampson and Schley held a consultation. They decided that the aid of the army was necessary; that a force by land was required to capture the fortifications before they could countermine the channel with mine-sweepers, steam in, and engage the timid Spanish fleet. As a result of this conference, General Shafter was ordered by the Government to land troops, and with the aid of the friendly Cubans, advance on the forts about the bay.

While this land operation was being put under way, it was decided by the naval commanders to attempt to make the blockade more effective by sinking in the channel the coal-ship *Merrimac*. The collier was nearly as long as the width of the watercourse at one point. If she could be successfully sent to the bottom here, laden with coal, there would be little probability of the enemy ships being able to get out if they wished. This would relieve in some measure the vigilance of the blockading squadrons, and allow some of the vessels to be withdrawn for needed service elsewhere. Who would volunteer? The mission not only required a cool head and stout heart, and high excellence in seamanship—for the whole operation would have to be performed directly under the guns of Socapa and Morro Castle—but there was not one chance in a thousand of the ones who undertook it ever returning. Volunteering, the officers frankly stated to their men when they assembled them, was almost equivalent to signing away one's life.

Yet there were more applicants for this desperate mission than could have been used on a dozen such undertakings! To Richmond P. Hobson, a young naval-constructor, was given the coveted position of leader. To assist him seven other young sailors were chosen.

Very early in the morning of June 3d, just

after the moon had set, and a good half-hour before dawn, the gallant little crew took their positions on the old collier. They had discarded all their outer garments, wearing only underclothes. About his waist each man carried a belt containing a revolver and knife, while under his arms circled a life-preserver. Thousands of comrades' eyes, on the decks behind, peered anxiously through the gloom as the *Merrimac* slowly and quietly steamed toward the mouth of the harbor, so heavily burdened that the waters lapped almost to her deck. Not a light did she bear, and her dauntless little crew spoke only in whispers as they hovered in the deepest shadows of her structure that their tasks of guidance would permit.

All at once, from away up there on the dark cliff just ahead, a red flare bursts into the night —then another, and another. And accompanying each flash there comes a shattering roar, while demons of iron and steel that they cannot see screech overhead and plunge into the sea beyond. Rockets are now shooting up from both shores. From across the waters other big guns belch forth their charges, and the hail of life-taking missiles increases in their small area. Hundreds of jets, white and glistening, leap up from the channel all about them as the shrapnel strikes. Now a broad path of light stretches

from Morro Castle across the inky heavens; it slowly drops, bathes the rugged hills on the other side of the harbor in its pallid glow, then, like a restless finger, swings lower still, creeping here and there over the waters of the channel, halting a moment searchingly, and going on till it finally rests its brilliant beams upon the moving shape of the old collier. It is war's latest weapon—the electric searchlight, the very thing the eight young Yankees on the *Merrimac* have been hoping will not be used upon them.

Now they lie, vividly outlined, in a vortex of strong light. Involuntarily those on deck shrink closer to the protecting objects nearest them, for they know what is coming. But steadfast their hearts and hands hold to the purpose before them; there is not the slightest quaver in the voice of Hobson as he issues in low tones his orders; not the least nervousness in the hand of the pilot, nor the engineer and his helpers, nor the deckhands. Even as the big guns of the enemy begin to thunder faster—into an almost continuous crash—and the sprinkle of shot about them develops into a blinding cloudburst of shrapnel, ripping holes in hull and through smokestack, they keep on with set teeth, praying that they may be permitted to reach the narrows before death comes.

Their prayer is granted. As by a miracle the

*Merrimac* is steered, without a man perishing, to the appointed spot. But just as Hobson gives the order to swing her across the channel for sinking, an enemy shot tears away the rudder with a shuddering smash. At the same moment her stern anchor, cut clean, plunges to the bottom.

It is now impossible to hold the collier long enough to sink her just in the way intended. Instead of holding straight across the channel, the rudderless craft begins to swing back in line with the current, and to go drifting into wider waters. Like a mad antelope, young Hobson springs to the buttons which connect with the electric batteries that will explode the mines in the hold and send the collier to the bottom.

As he touches the buttons there are two muffled explosions on one side of the ship; but there are none on the other, and he realizes that the fire of the enemy has damaged the batteries on that side. Hobson is greatly disappointed; he is afraid that the *Merrimac* will not sink at once, as planned.

He is right. While the enemy shots have opened her up, and helped her to take in water quite rapidly, the side with the unexploded mines rides high, and she continues to drift into wider waters as she slowly settles. Hobson and his comrades know only too well that it will be death

to spring overboard right now in that terrible rain of shot. Far better will it be to wait till the collier is on the very verge of going down; then perhaps the firing will cease, or they will be out of range, and their swim will have some chance of resulting in personal safety.

At last comes the end. Dipping her head deep beneath the waves, and throwing her stern high in the air, the collier suddenly dives for the bottom. Through the whirlpool of rushing waters, fearful of the final suction, the men fight their way to the raft which the ship has been towing, and which has been released at the final moment. Not a man is lost.

Dawn found them all huddled on the raft, where they had sought a compulsory rest of aching muscles. As the first rays of day swept away the night the vigilant Spaniards saw them. In a very short time a steam-launch appeared filled with the dark faces of the foe. In the very front stood an officer of apparent high grade.

"Is there any officer on board that boat to receive the surrender of prisoners of war?" called Hobson, rising.

For answer a dozen Mausers were leveled at him and his comrades. Bravely they faced the rifles, expecting to see them spout out their death shots for them. But an angry command came from the man in the bow, and the rifles dropped.

It was Admiral Cervera, of the Spanish fleet. The little band of Americans were taken to his flag-ship, and in the afternoon Cervera sent an officer under a flag of truce to Admiral Sampson. The messenger gravely handed the American commander a note which apprised him of the safety of his eight men, then added: "Daring like theirs makes the bitterest enemy proud that his fellowmen can be such heroes!" It was a wonderful tribute from the leader of the enemy to Richmond Hobson and his valiant companions.

### THE DESTRUCTION OF CERVERA'S FLEET

For five weeks the combined squadrons of Admiral Sampson and Commodore Schley had been riding at the mouth of Santiago Bay—waiting, always waiting, and hoping, for the moment when the trying routine of watching would be dropped for the roar and dash of a great naval engagement with the choicest ships of Spain, bottled up in the harbor. In the meantime the American army under General Shafter had been slowing but surely working its way up behind the city of Santiago, and now—on Sunday morning of the 3d of July—rested on their arms, for a brief moment before undertaking the difficult onslaught upon the city itself.

In the squadrons you would have found the armored-cruiser *Brooklyn,* capable of twenty-one knots an hour, and serving as the flag-ship of Commodore Schley, the same Schley who years before took out of the Arctic snows the dying survivors of the ill-fated Greely expedition and brought them home. There was the first-class battleship *Oregon,* fresh from her long journey of fifteen thousand miles from Puget Sound, around Cape Horn; and her sister ship the *Indiana*—both with their eighteen-inch walls of steelplate and their heavy thirteen-inch guns which throw a projectile five miles, and require for it more than five hundred pounds of powder and three times that weight in metal, at a cost of close to six hundred dollars per discharge. There was the big battleship *Iowa,* with "Fighting Bob" Evans in command; and the *Texas,* called the "hoodoo ship" by her crew because of the many misfortunes befalling her. There was also the battleship *Massachusetts,* with her powerful twinscrews and great speed, and crew of over four hundred men. Besides these greater ships, there were a number of sleek-looking cruisers, torpedo-destroyers, and converted warships.

Admiral Sampson, first in command of all the flotilla, was absent for the first time during the

blockade. Under the orders of President McKinley he had steamed a few miles east with the *New York* to confer with General Shafter upon a matter of importance. He had said just as he was leaving, "If I go away something will happen." Nor was he mistaken. Something did happen—something he would have given his right hand to have been present to meet!

This Sunday morning you are introduced to, opened up not unlike most of the others the fleet had experienced during the past month. The sun was brazen and hot; the water calm. Across on the high promontory at the entrance to the harbor stood Morro Castle, silent, mediæval, grim. Over its battlements of gray masonry flew a couple of gulls, giving no indication of the noisome dungeons in which many an inhuman execution has taken place just below, nor telling of the ravenous sharks which inhabit the waters at the base of the cliff, ready to seize the first morsel of flesh that should come their way, be it animal or human—sharks which have been quick to destroy for an age the butchered evidence of Spanish cruelty.

By nine o'clock the American sailors were rigged out in clean white middies and trousers, ready for inspection and religious service.

A half-hour later, just as the bugle on the

*Oregon* sounded for chaplain's assembly, the officer on the forward bridge of the *Brooklyn* called out through his megaphone: "After bridge there! Report to the Commodore and the captain that the enemy's ships are coming out!"

Almost with his words the boom of a gun on the *Iowa* attracted attention to a string of little flags going up her mizzen-rigging, which said: "The enemy's ships are escaping to the westward."

Needless to say, in an instant everything on board the Yankee ships was in a commotion. The chaplain was forgotten, Sunday was forgotten—every sailor's ear was pricked to catch the first order of officer, and his feet and hands held poised to obey it like lightning. Every ship fairly pulsed with excitement as well as action. Yet, in spite of the suddenness of the long-hoped-for announcement, in spite of the hundreds of men that hurried here and there over the decks and in the rigging, there was no sign of disorder or confusion. With perfect precision and wonderful system the machinery of preparation for pursuit and battle was set in motion, and clicked swiftly and smoothly on.

In less than five minutes after the first word of the coming of Cervera's fleet every anchor was up, every gun manned, and the American ships began to move toward the enemy who could be

seen coming out of the harbor at full speed, working off toward the westward as if to attempt escape into the sea in that direction.

Meanwhile the *New York,* which it will be remembered carried Admiral Sampson along the coast to the eastward, had just reached its destination, seven miles distant, and was about to land its commander, when the sound of the *Iowa's* heavy gun was heard. Then, as the American ships were seen to be getting under headway, Sampson surmised that the enemy had at last appeared, and ordered his flag-ship back under all speed.

To the men of the fleet the increasing clouds of black smoke in the harbor showed beyond the shadow of a doubt that every one of Admiral Cervera's vessels was with him in the desperate dash of the Spaniards for liberty. Soon the officers of the foremost Yankee ships could make out with their glasses the flag-ship of the enemy —the *Maria Teresa*—which was leading. She was the first of her flotilla to thrust her nose out of the opening into the sea. Following closely behind her, in good order, were the other armored-cruisers of Spain, consisting of the *Viscaya,* the *Cristobal Colon,* the *Almirante Oquendo;* and the torpedo-destroyers, the *Pluton* and the *Furor.* The foe craft were from eight hundred to twelve hundred yards apart, and it was fully fifteen min-

utes before the last of them had passed the cape at the harbor's mouth. As they did so, they turned squarely west.

They were now within good long range of the Americans, who were approaching as fast as steam could carry them. The Spaniards were first to fire. As they flew on they let go their near batteries of heavy guns, to which the Yankee fleet made instant reply. While practically all of the enemy's shots went wild, some of the shells of the Americans were seen to find marks. In a few minutes the Yankee gunners had obtained a still more accurate range, and the débris of the foe began to litter the water in their wake.

But not all of the shots of the Spaniards were thrown away. As the Americans began to overhaul the enemy his own aim grew more accurate, and a number of the pursuers endured minor strikes. Among these was the *Brooklyn,* which, taking probably the most prominent and exposed part in the fight, suffered greatest. When the Americans had closed up rather well an enemy shell hurtled fairly against the muzzle of one of the *Brooklyn's* big guns on the engaged side, and wedged itself in the bore in such a manner that the weapon was temporarily rendered useless.

A few minutes later the flag at the masthead of the *Brooklyn* was carried away by a shot from the *Viscaya.* Without hesitation a sailor jumped

overboard and rescued the emblem, risking shot and the sharks that infested the waters. When he was picked up he insisted on being allowed to replace the flag, which he did by nailing it to the spar after a perilous climb.

From the first the *Brooklyn* had realized that this was to be a fighting chase in which she must lead. She steamed at the Spanish flag-ship under full head. Perhaps her commander recalled that the *Viscaya* had been a rival of the *Brooklyn's* at the Jubilee of Queen Victoria the year before. Be that as it may, she soon overhauled the Spaniard, then sweeping by fired her port broadside into him; wheeled about, and coming back gave him the other broadside. The effect of these shots was most disastrous to the enemy. His hull was pierced in several places, his rigging torn away, some of his best guns dismantled, while many dead and wounded littered his deck, and fire began its consuming work in his hold.

While this was going on the two Spanish torpedo-destroyers, the *Furor* and the *Pluton,* bent on protecting their flag-ship, were making madly for the *Brooklyn.* The sharp eyes of Lieutenant-Commander Richard Wainwright were on them, however. He sped his little converted-yacht *Gloucester* with rare and amazing courage straight into the breach, bent upon heading

off the two enemy destroyers and diverting their attention till assistance should come.

Running in at close range, Wainwright, who had been a former officer of the ill-fated *Maine*, worked his small rapid-firing guns with a vigor and accuracy that confused the *Pluton* and *Furor*. In a very few minutes the three ships were enveloped in the clouds of their own gun smoke, at times completely hidden from friend and foe. As the curtain raised once, the American saw a signal from the *Brooklyn* for him to save himself and draw out of danger, but filled with the ardor of the fight—perhaps bent upon vengeance, with the Nation's rallying cry of "Remember the *Maine!*" ringing in his ears—Wainwright for once in his life ignored a superior's command, and continued to wage his relentless warfare with a fury that bewildered the Spaniards and amazed the Yankee fleet.

Finally a well-placed shot was sent almost through the *Pluton*, crippling her so badly that she began to take in water at a terrifying rate. Noting the helplessness of her sister ship, the *Furor* now turned and made off. Several times she sought refuge behind the cruisers of her fleet, only to be driven forth by the insatiable little American ship which pounded shot into protector and protected indiscriminately until they were apart, when she would once more give her whole

attention to the frightened destroyer. At length, looking more like a sieve than a respectable Spanish destroyer, the *Furor* plunged limpingly for shore. She soon struck a reef, and went under the rolling surf. Wainwright's crew managed to rescue most of the survivors, also those on board the other torpedo-destroyer. In all only twenty-four Spanish sailors were saved from the two ships, one hundred and twenty having perished.

Meanwhile the other American ships had not been idle. The *Maria Teresa* and the *Oquendo* were on fire, and, badly riddled, had run aground on the shore six miles west of the harbor. A later examination showed that one had been struck thirty-three times, and the other sixty-seven times. This speaks eloquently of the high quality of the American marksmanship.

By eleven o'clock the *Viscaya,* adopting the tactics of her other surrendered consorts, ran for land fifteen miles above the harbor and beached her scarred and shattered hulk upon the rocks. Like them she was on fire, and fearing an early explosion of her magazine, her crew had sought to get off before it came. Now scores of the sailors could be seen springing into the sea, and swimming and wading through the breakers, many being dashed to death against the rocks by the heavy surf.

As quickly as they could the American boats

went to the rescue of the hapless enemy. As the *Texas* passed by one of the stranded Spanish ships, some of her crew started to cheer, but Captain Philip, with fine chivalry and compassion, told them not to cheer a victory when the vanquished were helplessly dying. The *Iowa* and the *Ericsson* now took off those who had remained aboard the *Maria Teresa* and the *Oquendo,* while the *Gloucester* received those on the *Viscaya.* Among the latter survivors was Admiral Cervera himself. He was naturally greatly crestfallen, but Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright treated him with every courtesy and did everything possible for his comfort, not forgetting how the gallant Spanish admiral had dealt with Hobson and his men when in his power.

While all this was transpiring, the Spanish ship *Cristobal Colon* had succeeded in pushing on out of the thickest of the fight, hoping to make good her own escape at least. She was the best and fastest of the enemy vessels. When the *Viscaya* went ashore, the fleetness of the *Colon* had placed her fully six miles ahead, and as soon as she realized the fate of the *Viscaya* she made greater efforts than ever to put a long distance between herself and the nearest American vessels.

The *Brooklyn,* the *Oregon,* the *Texas,* and the *Vixen* now started in pursuit. It was a won-

derful race. Never will it be forgotten by any of the crews taking part in it. The powerful engines of the *Brooklyn* quickly made it possible for her to lead the way; but soon the *Oregon,* using choice Cardiff coal saved for just such an emergency, was puffing along a close second. It is doubtful if ever before the boilers of these two American warships had been so filled with glowing coals. In the boiler-rooms the heat was almost insufferable, soon mounting to a hundred and fifty degrees Fahrenheit. Stripped to the waist, with grimy, touseled hair, and faces like beets in their color, the stokers threw shovelful after shovelful of black diamonds into the fiery maws before them, getting little chance to rest, so fast was the fuel devoured in making that immense amount of steam under which the engines were throbbing till the very decks vibrated. It was no uncommon thing to see a fireman faint. At one time in the hold of the *Oregon* several of them were stretched out at once. It was then that the engineer called out to the captain, as attempts were made to revive them: "If these fellows can only hear a few guns they will come up smiling!" Really it was these sweaty, coal-smeared stokers who won that race and the victory attending it. No hero ever worked harder, more valiantly for his country, than they.

As the *Colon* saw her pursuers gaining

steadily, she began hugging in toward the shore, evidently with the intention of beaching herself if no other escape offered. At this the American ships made a shortcut on a diagonal course, aiming for a projecting headland some distance in front of the Spaniard and which he must pass if he continued onward. There was no firing yet. The Yankees were so confident now in overhauling the chased craft that it was thought best to get closer before sending in a shell.

By this time the *Brooklyn* and the *Oregon* had pulled so far away from their consorts that they were often hidden from view by the heavy clouds of smoke curling in their wake. Presently a flash was seen at the stern of the enemy, and a shell screamed toward the Americans. A few moments later there was another. But both shots fell far short.

A little later, when Commodore Schley was told by his navigator that the distance between the *Colon* and the *Oregon* was but eight thousand five hundred yards, or five miles, he signaled to the *Oregon,* just behind him, to try a thirteen-inch shell on the enemy. Instantly the battleship complied, the missile falling a little short. Again the order came. The muzzle was elevated a trifle more, and once more the big gun crashed. But this time the water spouted up beyond the *Colon.* The third shot was better. It was a fair

strike, cutting off a portion of the Spaniard's rigging as clean as a sharp knife severs a pine stick. Now the *Brooklyn* sent in several shots, followed by more from the *Oregon*.

At this juncture the *Colon* was seen to be running for shore, with her colors struck. She had given up the fight. Forty-two miles from Santiago harbor this running fight had reached. As she drew in toward land and shallow water, her crew scuttled her and she began rapidly to fill and sink. But by this time the *New York* had come up, and pushed her in till she settled on the beach. Thus was the purpose of her crew to destroy her defeated by the quick action of their captors.

In all, four hundred Spaniards had lost their lives in this sea fight, while about sixteen hundred had been taken prisoners. On the American side only *one* man had lost his life—a most remarkable result considering the great number of shots the enemy had fired and the fierceness of the combat for a time. In this respect it bore a striking resemblance to Dewey's recent naval engagement in Manila Bay.

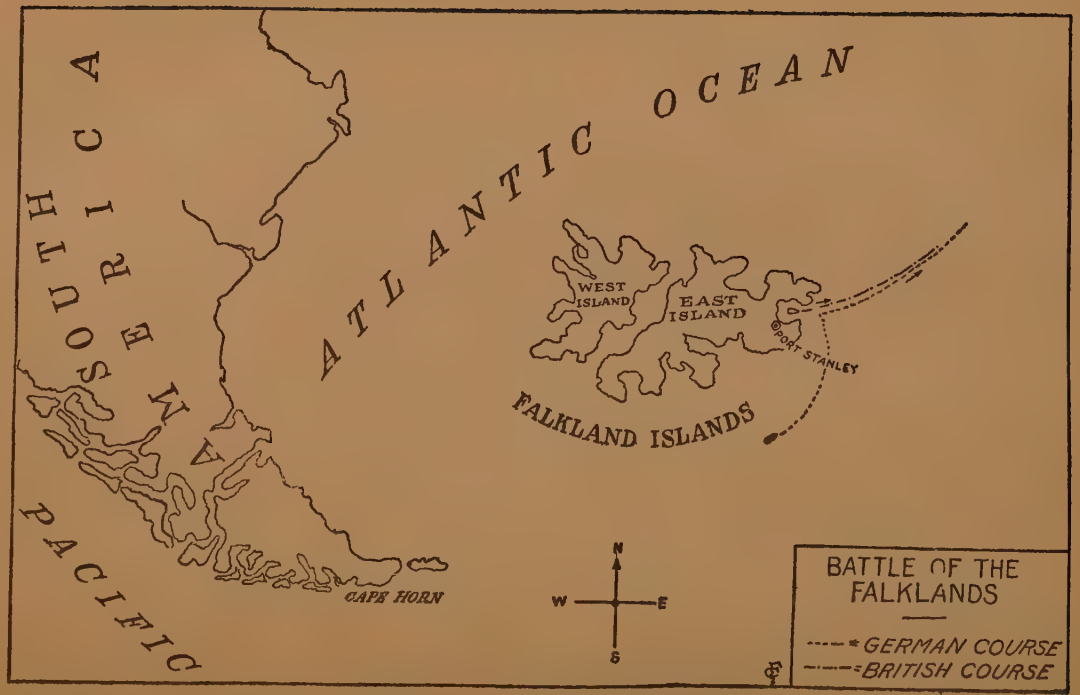
The splendid victory of American sea arms opened the gates of Santiago from the front, and thereby saved thousands of lives in the thinned little American army which in its three-days' fighting back of the city had all but gained entrance. Threatened in front and behind Santiago soon after capitulated.

## XIII

## THE RUNNING FIGHT OFF THE FALKLANDS

'Twere enough had these steel leviathans
Been satisfied with one feast of prey;
They staid too long,
Now came a song
Of vengeance from the landlocked bay:
Great guns roared; they fled, dismayed,
Before steel craft, still swifter made—
And in a breath
They'd met their death,
And for their boldness dearly paid.

—*Villers.*




THE BATTLE OF THE FALKLANDS

# The Running Fight off the Falklands

At the outbreak of the World War, in the summer of 1914, the British Grand Fleet at once took its position in Scotch waters facing the German ports. Here they did valiant work all through four long years of the struggle, completely shutting in all German craft except submarines, and rendering the power of the German navy practically harmless.

But when hostilities were declared there were, as usual at the beginning of all wars, war vessels and merchantmen of the various nations involved scattered here and there over the seas and in many ports. Among the few fighting ships Germany had away from home waters at this time was the squadron of Admiral Von Spee, which included the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau,*—two very swift and powerful battle-cruisers,—as well as the *Nurnberg,* the *Dresden,* and the *Leipzig,* destroyers. This squadron was caught, by the edict of war, in the waters of the South Pacific. So quick had been the action of Great Britain in blockading Germany's coast that Von Spee found there was little chance for him to

run into a home port had he chosen; but this did not greatly bother him, as he wished to strike some telling blows upon the enemy's interests before he left his present stalking grounds, and thought he would really have no trouble to get into a German harbor when the necessity finally arose.

Within a very short time, however, he began to think he might have his hands full. One day his wireless brought him word that Japan had joined forces with the enemy, and that a Japanese fleet was even then about to start out to look him up. As he had every good reason to avoid meeting the powerful Japanese flotilla, Von Spee made haste to strike his blows and get out of the locality. By diligent use of his wireless he gathered his far-flung ships together in record time, and made for the coast of Chili, having learned by the same means of communication from German agents in Ecuador and Colombia that some victims awaited him at Coronel.

At Coronel, in the meantime, Admiral Cradock, of the British Royal Navy, had been lying in harbor with some very decrepit and poorly-equipped warships. This squadron consisted of the antiquated battle-cruisers *Monmouth* and *Good Hope,* also the *Glasgow* and the *Canopus,* the latter second-rate light cruisers.

Admiral Cradock, outnumbered and without

the ghost of a show in the beginning, put up a valiant fight when the two squadrons met. But the result was inevitable. The short and bitter fight witnessed the complete defeat of the British, the brave Cradock going down with his flagship, only the *Canopus* and the *Glasgow* managing to escape.

Britain for a moment was dazed; the Admiralty was blamed not only by the public of England but by the governments and publics of her Allies. It was declared by one and all that poor Cradock should never have been permitted to be so far away from home with such wretched ships; and the Admiralty, nodding reluctantly, at once put the entire blame on Vice-Admiral Sturdee, Chief of the War Staff, who, from his office in London, had had control of the ill-fated squadron in the South Pacific. This almost broke poor Sturdee's heart, for he had done the best he could; if Cradock had not been given better and more ships it was because he had thought they were more urgently needed elsewhere. He made up his mind that in only one way could he vindicate himself in the eyes of his compatriots and the Allies; he must, rather than throw off responsibility, take more on; he must cause a disaster to German naval craft that would compensate doubly for their victory over Cradock's squadron.

Under the light of incandescents, great maps of war glare white upon the walls. Like sheets of a woman's washing hung out to dry, they touch corner to corner around the big room. Benches, just below, make it possible for man to reach them—to insert and to withdraw any one of the scores of black blobs and little flags that stick into them, representing the positions of the four thousand ships whose movements are all under the instant beck and call of this room, though they may be thousands of miles away.

The shades are drawn. Not a ray of light leaks out of the strange apartment into the murk of the darkened streets of London—a London of startling, death-like quiet, a London hiding itself from the Zeppelin nighthawks of the enemy. Here in the innermost room of the new wing of the Admiralty building at Whitehall, is the "Chamber of Strategy" of the British War Staff. It is the real nerve center of the British Royal Navy.

Wireless telegraphy has transformed the Nelsons of to-day into mere subordinates. Their orders, even in the heat of battle, do not come from the deck of the flag-ship, but from the desk of an office in the heart of London, far, far away. When a squadron moves on the seas, it also moves on the huge map on the wall, be it British, American, German or Austrian. The moment a ship

is destroyed by storm or battle, the tiny flag representing it on the map disappears with it. There is no roar of big guns at the Admiralty, no smoke of battle; and yet there is no lack of excitement, no lack of dramatic interest.

Just imagine yourself present at one of these tense moments—for instance, in the month of November, 1914. Little sparks of blue have not long ceased spitting out their message of the wiping out of Cradock's squadron at Coronel. All England is demanding naval revenge. Everybody looks sullenly at Admiral Sturdee.

A door of the inner chamber jerks open, a clatter of typewriters comes through, clerks are seen running hither and thither with baskets of letters. In bolts a heavy-set man, with square jaw and gray hair, and a plentiful display of gold braid bands almost to his elbow. This is Lord Fisher, Admiral of the Fleets, active master mind of all the British fighting ships. From him every fleet and squadron admiral must get his orders. It is chiefly to this strong man that Great Britain owes the wonderful strength of her present navy. At seventy-four he is the biggest man with the biggest job in the United Kingdom.

As Lord Fisher enters the chamber there is a growl from the square jaws, a savage snap of the teeth. He looks for all the world as if he were a bull just pricked by the picador's darts. He is

thinking of Cradock. Poor Admiral Sturdee knows that well enough, and he feels none too easy as he beckons the First Sea Lord up to the table where he and his fellow junior officers have been gravely discussing some maps and plans. Scattered near are divers mechanical drawing instruments and mathematical notations.

Admiral Sturdee directs the attention of Lord Fisher to these plans, and says a few words briefly. The gruff chief's eyes lighten up for a moment, a few of the scowling wrinkles thin out along his brow. But only for a moment, then he snarls out: "Fine enough plans, Sturdee! Why don't you carry them out yourself?"

"Will you let me?" cries Sturdee.

"Yes; go!"

Sturdee's chance to redeem himself has come. Von Spee's ships had better watch out! Without a moment's delay Sturdee sits down and writes out his own orders to the commander of the British squadron which is to wreak vengeance for Admiral Cradock. The battle-cruisers are under repair. But no matter; the workmen can be taken along to complete their jobs while the vessels are under way, to be dropped off at the first coaling point!

It is touch and go. At the break of the signal the course is laid down the South American coast. A fight hovers near.

There are great differences between the naval conditions of to-day and those of a hundred years ago. These lie in the greater speed of ships, in the longer range of guns, in the menace of the torpedo as fired from destroyers and submarines, in the menace of mines, and in the use of aircraft scouts, and of wireless telegraphy. In the Napoleonic era the ships, of wood, had a speed fully ten times slower than now, even under the most favorable conditions for them; and half the time they could not move at all owing to lack of wind. To-day the fastest destroyers will easily make twenty-five knots an hour in anything but the very roughest of weather. Then ships could not damage an enemy farther away than eight thousand yards; the vessels of to-day will sink an enemy at twenty-two thousand yards, or over eleven nautical miles' range. The torpedo is effective up to ten thousand yards, and this requires that a ship shall keep beyond this distance in order to be safe from this sort of peril.

From this it will be seen that the day of boarding and close-quarters fighting is a thing of the past. Practically all modern fighting is done at a distance of from one thousand to two thousand yards, preferably fifteen hundred, at which distance gun fire is very effective and the enemy can be plainly seen, in fair weather, with the naked eye.

To the east of the southern portion of South America lies the British group known as the Falkland Islands. On the larger of these islands —East Falkland—the British have a powerful wireless station. It was word from this station which had caused Admiral Sturdee, in London, to gulp with sudden joy, and forthwith prepare plans to visit it. The intelligence had come from a lady and her servants who lived on the island. This bright woman, whose home was on a high elevation and who possessed a strong glass, declared that she had recently seen several ships out at sea which she was quite sure were German and belonged to Von Spee's squadron. As the *Glasgow* and the *Canopus,* which had escaped from Von Spee in the fight off Coronel, had sought refuge in the harbor of Port Stanley, East Falkland, it was concluded that either the German admiral was in search of these or intended a general attack on the Falklands themselves.

The truth is, Von Spee had it up his sleeve to kill two birds with one stone. His scouts, which the lady had observed, had discovered the *Glasgow* and the *Canopus* in their places of refuge, and now it was the commander's intention to bombard the town and sink the two ships at the one operation.

We may judge then of his surprise when he

came around Cape Horn only to find that in the meantime eight additional British warships had slipped into the harbor, and were waiting calmly to receive him. So swiftly and so secretly had every movement of Admiral Sturdee's been made that, for once at least, German intelligence efficiency had gone awry—as it did many a time later on during the war, despite scientific intrigue and the most extensive spy system the world has ever known.

It was about half-past nine in the morning that the German ships, *Gneisenau* and *Nurnberg* leading, and not yet having discovered the true situation, drew near to Port Stanley Harbor with their heavy guns trained on the tall wireless tower. Between them and the harbor was a long, low stretch of land running eastward, behind which lay the *Canopus* and the *Glasgow*. Suddenly the Germans were astonished to find themselves the target for a smart fire which swept across this low ground at a range of about six miles!

The two foe ships stopped, considered; then evidently deeming discretion the better part of valor, hoisted their colors and turned away. About the same time H. M. S. *Invincible* sighted other hostile ships nine or ten miles distant. At once signals went up from the British flag-ship ordering all ships to form in battle line and move forward to meet the enemy. As the squadron

proceeded all five of Von Spee's ships could be plainly seen to the southeast. The day was fine, with a calm sea, a bright sun, a clear sky, and a light breeze from the northwest.

Careful observation of the German vessels soon made it apparent that they were afraid of an engagement, and were doing their best to get out of the neighborhood. Instead of bows forward, as at the beginning, sterns stared the British sailors in the face. The foe was running—running for dear life.

The British sea-dogs fairly bayed at this, like hounds after a fleeing fox. It would never do to be cheated of their prey like this—never! If the Grand Fleet up in the North Sea could not coax out the boastful German High Seas Fleet for a respectable little set-to, here at least *they* had a bunch of German craft where a protecting palisade of cowardly mines did not come between! Run, Von Spee! Dig in, Von Spee! If your legs are more nimble than Britain's, all well and good; if not—

Two signals run up on Admiral Sturdee's flagship, the *Invincible*. One says, "God save the King!" The other reads, "Give chase to the enemy!" A mighty cheer swells up from the decks of the five British warships; the sailors tumble over one another in their efforts to perform the duties the officers are calling out; the speed of the heavy ships increases noticeably.

It is a stern chase, for the enemy vessels too are swift and well-handled. But slowly the space between the two flying squadrons decreases. The destroyers, fleetest of all the ships, sway from side to side dizzly, the sea dashing over their foredecks in great roaring sheets, as they plunge along their way. Their crews on deck cling to objects as they work, to prevent being slithered off into the sea and lost; and in the wardroom officers studying charts are lashed to their seats so that they can hold their papers in both hands without being thrown across the cabin.

Through it all Admiral Sturdee stands on the bridge of his flag-ship with quickened pulse and eager heart. More than half the time his glass is at his eyes. Each time he drops it those eyes express greater satisfaction. Finally, a little past noon, he notes that he is within suitable range of the enemy. He decides to open the attack with the *Invincible,* the *Inflexible,* and the *Glasgow.* How the officers and crew of the last-named vessel, especially, have longed for this moment! Forced to see their weak sister ships hammered to pieces before their very eyes, under Cradock a few weeks before, now they will have a chance for a sweet revenge.

The signal goes up, "Engage the enemy." It is the *Inflexible* that gets in the first shot, followed a minute later by the *Invincible.* Their big fif-

teen-inch guns jar the decks when they go off, but the men are used to this and pay no attention. The range is about eight miles—a little closer than necessary and within the danger zone of torpedoes, but Sturdee is eager to wind matters up quickly. The water spouts up a hundred feet in the air, showing that the shells have missed. Almost immediately the enemy replies, and similar jets of water shoot up a half-mile beyond the British.

The British ships now work around and fire a salvo of their heavy pieces, followed by their lighter batteries. Two of the German squadron give evidence of distress. A cheer goes up aboard the *Invincible* and the *Glasgow.* Then they notice that three of the hostile ships are making off to the eastward. Without further ado, the *Glasgow,* the *Cornwall,* and the *Kent* take up the chase.

While this pursuit is going on let us consider the movements of the heavier craft.

The *Invincible* engages Von Spee himself in his flag-ship, the *Scharnhorst,* and the *Inflexible* looks after the *Gneisenau.* These two German ships, after their temporary slowing up, now begin to make full speed away from the scene, and the fight that goes on is made while all vessels are under considerable headway. Sturdee and his crew are just as determined as ever that the foe flag-ship shall not get away.

Presently a good shot carries away the after funnel of the *Scharnhorst*. A few minutes later, the men in the foretop report that she is on fire. What a cheer goes up! But it is as nothing to that which arises a little later when the flames can be seen from deck, and great clouds of smoke arise, mixed with billows of white steam. The guns of the German, however, still roar forth, but at far longer intervals than before.

Shortly another shell bores its way into her hull, tearing a great ragged gap through which the British can see the red glow of the furnace of flames that is fast eating out the entrails of the doomed vessel. As she begins perceptibly to settle, however, her courageous crew continue to use those of her guns that are still undamaged. It is a brave effort that even the pursuers admire, hated as the Germans are, and a faint cheer goes up involuntarily from more than one Jack Tar's throat.

The *Invincible* realizes her present task is done. She turns her attention to assisting the *Inflexible* punish the *Gneisenau,* which has already been pretty well shot up, but is still making good speed and using her guns as she runs. By five o'clock she also has lost a funnel, and is on fire in several places. And yet, displaying the same heroism as her sister ship she struggles on her course, while her batteries continue to thunder out their de-

fiance with constantly decreasing effectiveness, finally resorting to her last gun. An hour later she heels over and sinks. Here is an entry in the diary of one of her officers, taken after his rescue: "5:10, Hit, hit! 5:12, Hit! 5:14, Hit, hit, hit! 5:20, After-turret gone. 5:40, Hit, hit! On fire everywhere. 5:41, Hit, hit! Flames breaking through all over. Sinking. 5:45, Hit! Men nearly half killed. 5:46, Hit, hit!"

After the last entry the officer evidently had something else to do than make notes in his diary. In the meantime boats had been lowered from the *Invincible* and the *Inflexible,* life-buoys and ropes were thrown to the unfortunates who could not be immediately reached, and in this way about three hundred of the Germans were saved, including the captain of the *Gneisenau.* Admiral Von Spee went down with his ship apparently, as he could not be found among the saved.

While this action was going on the *Glasgow* and the *Cornwall* had fought and sunk the *Leipzig.* Like the other German craft she took fire fore and aft, and as the shades of night were closing in, she turned over on her port side and disappeared. None of her crew was saved, so sudden was her plunge into the depths.

Meanwhile the *Kent* was dealing with the *Nurnberg,* experiencing a long chase on account of the fact that she had very little fuel. When

the stokers had done their best, and worked the ship up well above her official rate of speed, they reported that there was practically no coal left. This was bad news. It looked as if the *Nurnberg* would surely get away, for without fuel the *Kent* must soon begin to slow down and eventually stop altogether.

But the captain was equal to the occasion. He suggested breaking up the boats! No sooner mentioned than done. The small craft were taken from their davits and broken into bits, and fed to the hungry furnace. Even more, as it was seen additional wood was required, officers' chairs, chests, ladders,—everything which would burn and could be spared was given to the ax and fed into power. To make the flames hotter oil was put on the precious fuel.

In this way, and only in this way, did they gain on the *Nurnberg* sufficiently to round her up with their guns. She was riddled with shot, and went down like a lump of lead. As the ship sank the British sailors saw a group of men waving a German ensign fastened to a staff. The next moment they were swallowed up forever, but their heroic conduct was such as to make any enemy feel a tug of admiration and compassion in his heart for his adversary, no matter how bitter his natural attitude. Only five of the crew were picked up from this ship.

Of all the five German warships only one escaped. This was the fast light-cruiser *Dresden,* whose good luck was due entirely to the approach of evening and the shield of darkness. But this loss was more than made up at midnight, when Admiral Sturdee received a wireless message from H. M. S. *Bristol* to the effect that during the action two enemy transports had been destroyed near the Falklands.

On the whole it was a signal victory for the British. Moreover it was a great revenge. And to one man—he who engineered it—it brought a great blessing. Sturdee went back to the War Office in London with the heavy smirch that had beclouded his reputation gone completely —erased by his own gallant exploit. The Admiralty, London, England, all the Allies and all the Neutrals, paid him homage. He had redeemed himself nobly.

As for Sturdee himself, he stepped up to one of the great maps on the wall and plucked therefrom five tiny German flags that had been marking the vicinity of the Falkland Islands.

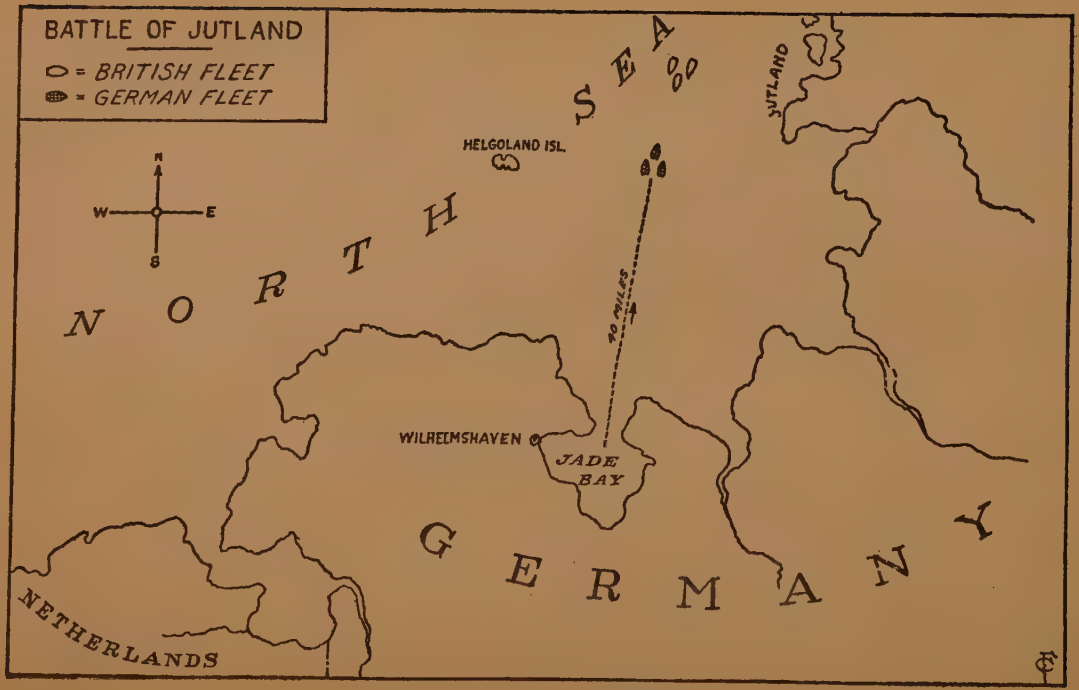
So Cradock and his gallant band did not die in vain. His defeat made a great moral victory.

# XIV

## THE BATTLE OFF JUTLAND BANK

High in the sky great man-birds fly,
As under the sea man-fish swim by;
Great forts of steel float in between
And cripple foes who can't be seen.

—*Curtis.*




THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

## The Battle off Jutland Bank

JUST prior to the opening scenes of the World War in 1914, Germany had a wonderful vision of snatching away from Great Britain her long-sustained reputation as "mistress of the seas." Secretly the German Empire for years had been building and equipping a most elaborate armada, spending money lavishly for the day when conditions would be ripe for her to measure her naval strength with those nations which she felt might array themselves against her when she should attempt to become master of the world.

But, as stated in a preceding chapter, when war broke out there was a little hitch in her calculations. Instead of having only France to deal with at the beginning, Great Britain jumped into the fracas so suddenly that Germany could not get her great High Seas Fleet out of Wilhelmshaven Harbor, and the consequence was these ships from which she had hoped so much were bottled up by the British Grand Fleet almost as helpless as so many flies in a trap. And all through the four years of the conflict the English ships maintained this vigil so sharply that only

a few stragglers of the enemy managed to sneak out.

Of course the German men-of-war were privileged to make a sortie and try to force their way through the blockade any time they chose; in fact, the British prayed daily for just such a happening, for they were wild to get the enemy vessels out from behind their protection of mines and land batteries where they could meet them in a fair test of supremacy. But, in spite of many efforts made to bait out the German armada by drawing the British fleet well away from the harbor, only once in those four long years did the German High Seas Fleet really venture forth far enough to get into action. And then they were crafty enough to come out of their hiding place late in the day, so that if the fight went against them (as we shall presently see it did) they could escape back to the harbor under cover of darkness.

This battle—the first and only one of the main fleets of the contending nations in this war—was the greatest in modern marine history. In it practically every type of modern naval fighting craft was used. There were the great, massive, floating steel forts called super-dreadnoughts, carrying crews of over one thousand men—enough to populate a respectable small town—and equipped with mammoth fifteen-inch guns,

into whose long barrels a man could crawl, and out of which barrels great steel shells could be vomited ten or eleven miles, to go through the steel plate of an enemy ship that could not be seen with the naked eye. There were the battle-cruisers—ships much like the super-dreadnaughts except that they were narrower and faster and carried guns of less power. There were the light-cruisers—ships of steel still lighter, still faster; made for the chase and for closer fighting. There were the destroyers—ships so long and rangy that they rocked like a cradle when under high pressure; the fastest of all warcraft, capable of almost express-train speed, and given torpedo-tubes through which these deadly explosive missiles could be sent to sink an enemy ship five miles away.

Then, too, there were those sly, destructive men-fish of the sea—the submarines; slow of speed, but with their terrible torpedoes, able to swim unseen under the water close enough to sink the largest of vessels; able also, through their huge glass eye, to spy upon the enemy unseen where surface craft would be instantly detected; able to successfully thread the tightest of blockades, to travel under water a hundred miles without once coming up, to cruise three weeks before needing new fuel; but ever subjected to the untold dangers of jagged submarine rocks,

enemy mines and nets, submarine-chasers, and hydroplanes whose aviators could see far down into the waters and were always ready to drop a death-dealing bomb.

There were, indeed, these seaplanes themselves. They nestled on the broad, flat upper decks of mother-ships made especially for them. From these decks they could wing away, far up into the clouds, there to watch and photograph enemy doings, and then whir their way back again. Or they could, a little lower, drop their terrible dynamite bombs on the deck of a foe, or the top of a fortification, creating awful havoc.

On May 30th, 1916, Sir John Jellicoe, commander-in-chief of the British Grand Fleet, having determined to make another effort to coax out the German High Seas Fleet from the harbor of Wilhelmshaven, ordered his squadrons to widen the breach. In this operation his fleet swept through the North Sea in a broad circle. It was divided into two portions. That section under Sir David Beatty, consisting of the battle-cruisers and certain supporting units, turned south and made a round of the broad gulf which is bounded on the east by Denmark and on the south by the flat German coast lying behind Heligoland. Admiral Jellicoe remained to the north, and in mid-afternoon of the following day was not far from the Norwegian coast at its southernmost point.

On this same day—May 31st—Admiral Von Scheer, of the German High Seas Fleet, seemed to have swallowed the bait at last. With his fleet he left his base and started northward about the middle of the afternoon. He too had divided his ships. But instead of going in different directions, he was astute enough to follow one course, and sent before the main fleet a battle-cruiser squadron under Admiral Von Hipper. It must not be assumed that Scheer had left the harbor to look up and challenge the British vessels in the belief that the time had come for him to institute a second Trafalgar. Far from it; every circumstance indicates that he thought it a splendid opportunity when the cat was away to let his mice come out and frolic; in other words, vacate their cramped quarters in Wilhelmshaven long enough to get their long-deferred high-seas exercise.

But the Germans' exercise was to be of a different sort than they anticipated. Shortly before three o'clock, Admiral Beatty, who had completed his swing through the North Sea, turned about and was headed north to join Jellicoe. At this moment a lookout in the foretop of one of his light-cruisers, the *Galatea,* sighted in the far distance a pencil-line of black smoke.

Instantly Beatty had his wireless operator get in touch with the operator on board one of the

squadron's seaplane mother-ships. When the blue flame had ceased hissing, all was understood. And a few minutes later the Admiral saw the huge bird rise gracefully from her nest, and under the skillful guidance of her pilot go soaring up into the heavens at an acute slant. In a very short time she was a mere speck against the gray ether—up fully two thousand feet. For awhile the seaplane hovered there, slowly circling, then down she swooped as quickly as she had gone up, and after a little maneuvering settled back in her nest.

Meantime the little blue sparks had crackled in the operator's room of Beatty's ship. Like lightning the operator's fingers had tapped the keys of a typewriter, as with receivers to ears he deciphered the message coming through the waste of ether that separated him from the seaplane. By three-thirty—long before the aircraft had come down—Admiral Beatty had received his first reports from her observer. These reports were extremely gratifying to him. They stated that the line of smoke seen to the eastward was made by a squadron of five German battle-cruisers! This turned out to be Admiral Von Hipper's. With Hipper was the usual accompaniment of light-cruisers and destroyers.

Admiral Beatty at once formed a line of battle, steering in the direction of the enemy, east-south-

east, at twenty-five knots. At the same time his Fifth Battle Squadron followed off to the northwest, keeping parallel with the main force.

Before the British ships had gone far, a blimp (captive balloon) on the deck of one of Von Hipper's vessels discovered them. The German squadron was seen to wheel about and make toward their High Seas Fleet. By reason of their slow speed it was rightly inferred by the British that Von Hipper hoped to lure the British squadron into good range of his main body before they could extricate themselves.

Beatty was perfectly willing to be drawn forward to the limits of safety, and under good speed took after the retreating foe. In order not to be caught in a trap with his own small complement of ships, Beatty sent two seaplanes ahead. From these he presently learned that the main fleet of the enemy was some fifty miles to the southward, whereupon he ordered more steam and increased the pressure against Von Hipper.

By three-fifty Admiral Beatty had reached a position about eighteen thousand yards in the rear of the enemy. As this was fair range for his heavy guns, he opened up. And about the same time Von Hipper did likewise. Thus six British ships whose total broadsides equalled thirty-two 13.5-inch guns and sixteen 12-inch guns were now in a duel with five German ships

whose total broadsides equalled sixteen 12-inch guns and twenty-eight 11-inch guns. By degrees the British closed up till a distance of less than fourteen thousand yards separated them from the enemy.

The British gunners were shooting with very good precision, having made hits several times, but these were not vital ones. On the other hand the German fire, while not as accurate, was more fortunate, and in almost as many strikes they had sunk the *Queen Mary* and the *Indefatigable,* which had developed marked structural defects.

The loss of these two ships reduced Admiral Beatty's armored vessels to four, and his weight of metal to an approximate equality with his antagonist who was still five ships strong. Yet he showed no signs of hesitancy, but continued to fight on aggressively. Presently his other wing —the Fifth Battle Squadron—came up to within twenty thousand yards of the enemy and essayed to lend him support by using their 15-inch guns. This was a very long range in any weather, and worse now, as the heavens had clouded and the air was somewhat misty. But as they drew nearer their shots seemed to have effect, for the fire of Von Hipper began to slacken perceptibly.

At four o'clock a lookout on the battle-cruiser *Invincible* telephoned to the bridge that the peri-

scope of a submarine could be seen about seven miles to the southwestward. A minute later a lookout in the foretop of the *Engadine,* mother-ship, reported another periscope about the same distance away, bearing more to the westward. Beatty saw that the enemy was about to precipitate a U-boat attack on him. These submarines must not be allowed to get within less than five miles, as then their deadly torpedoes could be effectively used upon some hapless member of the squadron.

Immediately he ordered forth four of his destroyers, and while these started toward the positions of the submarines, playing their guns as they went, Beatty got into communication with his cruising seaplanes which quickly came dashing out of the cloud mists to the southeast, dropped to within twelve hundred feet of the sea in the neighborhood where the U-boats were reported to have been seen, and floated slowly along, as their observers, bombs set and levers in hand, gazed intently down into the greenish waters for the dark moving shadow that would proclaim an enemy submarine. German shells burst in the air here and there about them, but the aviators coolly continued their search.

All at once an observer's arm moved; down through the air shot a pear-like object, guided unerringly by the little vanes at its tail end, and

plunged into the dark sea. An instant later there was a muffled explosion, the waters churned, heaved high, and settled again in a great disc of white, troubled foam. And presently in that foam appeared bits of wooden wreckage, and long irregular ribbons and patches of bluish-purple oil.

When the flyers saw this they smiled grimly, and flew away to help their brother airmen hunt for the other U-boat. *That* particular submarine was an enemy no longer! But the other German undersea craft had made good its frightened escape.

Admiral Von Hipper now sent a light-cruiser back with fifteen destroyers, bent upon assailing and destroying the destroyers which Beatty had dispatched in quest of the U-boats. Bravely the British destroyers stood in their tracks and fired their guns till they were so hot they could not be touched with the bare hand. In this fight they were helped by their own vessels farther to the rear. It was the hottest engagement yet, the sea showing almost continuous spouts of water in the vicinity of both squadrons wherever the shots missed their marks.

The haze had now thickened. The enemy could only be dimly made out. At four-forty the Second Light-Cruiser Squadron of the British force, which was scouting in advance, reported

that the German High Seas Fleet was approaching out of the mists to the southeastward.

Realizing that he would be overwhelmed by this huge reënforcement of the foe should he continue longer to chase Von Hipper, Admiral Beatty lost no time in changing his course and steaming at good speed toward the northwest. It is truly a queer turn of affairs. First we had Von Hipper running away from Beatty in an attempt to escape himself and at the same time draw the British into the net of the main German body behind. And now we have the situation exactly reversed: it is Beatty who runs, and Von Hipper who does the chasing; and Beatty hopes to draw the Germans into the clutches of Jellicoe!

This last phase of the situation is now an actuality. The enemy is quick to note the sudden lack of interest on the British admiral's part, and signaling the main fleet behind him to hurry forward and back him up, Von Hipper takes up the pursuit, his battle-cruisers stationing themselves in the van. As the turn is executed the Fifth Battle Squadron, steaming at an angle, engages the Germans in front for a few moments, then turns swiftly and falls in astern of Beatty, who now has eight ships in line.

Under a speed of about twenty-one knots, the British make just enough headway to cover ground well and at the same stroke do effective

work with their guns and encourage the pursuit. The range is now about fourteen thousand yards, and it can be seen that the enemy is getting heavily hit while his own shots are largely flying wild. Soon a German destroyer is seen to burst into flames and go down. And a little after five o'clock the enemy battle-cruiser *Lutzow,* badly damaged with fifteen good-sized holes in her, withdraws. Ten minutes later a British submarine succeeds in projecting a torpedo into the battle-cruiser *Pommern,* and the big German ship vanishes amid a cloud of smoke and steam. In the next half-hour three enemy destroyers are seen to sink. This leaves only three German battle-cruisers in the lead of the first foe division. Just before six o'clock, to their consternation, Admirals Von Hipper and Von Scheer find themselves within range of Admiral Jellicoe's big fleet. Beatty has very adroitly lured them on and on, as Von Hipper had lured him on and on, till now the great rival fleets of both nations face one another.

At this stage the positions of the contending fleets were as follows: Beatty, with four battle-cruisers of his own detachment, and four of the Fifth Squadron just astern, was now turning sharply eastward to pass across the head of the German High Seas Fleet and prevent it from edging in that direction, as it gave evidence of do-

ing. This would bring him at right-angles to the foe—or in the relative position of the horizontal bar on a letter T, the enemy represented by the upright stem,—the most advantageous position for stopping the Germans as well as raking their craft by broadsides. North of Beatty's ships was the main British fleet, with three battle-cruisers under Hood on one wing, and four armored-cruisers under Arbuthnot on the other. The head of the enemy line was about twelve thousand yards from Beatty, and twenty-two thousand yards from Jellicoe.

Admiral Beatty's eastward turn compelled the foe to turn, and created an opening for the main British fleet to move in and cut the Germans from their base. To reënforce Beatty in this critical operation, Hood steamed in fast with his three battle-cruisers, and swung magnificently into position at the head of Beatty's line. There he received, the next minute, a terrific fire from the enemy, eight thousand yards away. It was a torrent that no ship could stand up under long; and a short time later the *Invincible,* Hood's flag-ship, was struck by the combined salvoes of the German fleet, and sank. Three battle-cruisers were now gone; out of their combined crews of twenty-five hundred men a mere handful were saved.

A little earlier, Admiral Arbuthnot had bravely

attacked with his four weak armored-cruisers, striking the full front of the enemy which was almost completely hidden by smoke. This intervention prevented a dangerous German torpedo attack on the British cruisers, but it was poor Arbuthnot's last service for his country and he and his outnumbered ships perished.

Soon the *Warrior* was disabled, and the *Black Prince* badly hit, the enemy seeming to have concentrated their fire upon first one and then the other. A little later the *Warspite* showed signs of distress, but continued to use her guns with such determination and accuracy that her opponents slackened their fire, and she was able to make her way to the Fifth Battle Squadron which had taken a position just astern of Admiral Jellicoe's fleet.

About six-thirty this fleet had worked up near enough to engage in the fight for the first time. Had Jellicoe come a little sooner there is no doubt he would have saved many lives and several ships, for the struggle had been very unequal; but he had come as quickly as conditions would permit, apparently, the fog making it necessary for him to get within eleven thousand yards before he could properly distinguish the enemy from the ships of Beatty.

Even as it was the light was very bad. The Germans were shrouded in haze, and seemed anx-

ious to blanket themselves as much as they could; their destroyers sent up thick clouds of black coal smoke, which obscured an atmosphere already choked with the fumes of bursting shells and ship conflagration, and growing naturally darker with the close approach of night. From the front of the British Grand Fleet never more than five German craft could be seen at one time, and from the rear never more than a dozen.

As they fired their guns, the British constantly tried to close, but were eluded by the enemy, who utilized destroyer attacks to cover his retreat, and made back toward his base with all possible speed, much to the disgust of the British who, now that they had the Germans out in the open at last, wanted to have the matter of sea supremacy definitely settled. Difficult as it was to shoot with accuracy in this disconcerting dusk and smoke, surprisingly good hits were made, and more than one of the foe ships was set on fire or sunk in that will-o'-the-wisp retreat of the Kaiser's minions.

Particularly did the *Marlborough,* of the First Battle Squadron, distinguish herself. After sending two German destroyers to the bottom, she gave seven salvoes to an enemy battleship of the *Kaiser* class, also sinking her; but in the engagement was struck by a torpedo. From her engine-room a great cloud of smoke arose, she listed

violently, then recovered, and nine minutes later reopened fire, completing her work of sinking her third ship. A little later she turned upon a battleship of the *König,* class, and hopelessly crippled her.

The ships of the Fourth Battle Squadron were principally in action with the German battle-cruisers, while the Second Squadron looked after the German battleships. These British ships were greatly handicapped, like their sister vessels, with the obscurity of smoke and night, but made their power felt nevertheless.

About eight o'clock the battleship engagement closed, the enemy disappearing in the smoke and mist to the west of Admiral Jellicoe's fleet. Orders were issued to the torpedo craft to look up the Germans and attack if they could be found. Twenty minutes later Beatty pushed west in support of the destroyers, and presently sighted two enemy battleships and two battle-cruisers. These he attacked at a range of ten thousand yards—a long distance considering the difficult visuality. The leading German ship was hit repeatedly, and turned away with a heavy list, emitting flames. Another German vessel—possibly the *Heligoland*—was also struck until she was set afire. A third enemy craft, a three-funneled battleship, was so battered by the *Indomitable* and the *New Zealand* that she could barely get away in the shroud of gloom.

By eight-thirty darkness had closed in to an extent that prevented all further fighting, and the German ships, well-scattered, were last seen flying in a westerly direction. At eight-forty a violent explosion was felt by the British Grand Fleet. This was probably caused by the destruction of another German ship—one whose flames had at last reached her powder magazine.

All night the British fleet remained in those waters, hoping against hope that the enemy intended to return with the opening of another day to settle the question of superiority in a decisive manner. But when morning dawned only their own ships were to be seen. The German vessels had gone into Wilhelmshaven Harbor, soundly trounced, and quite ready to stay there till the end of the war if going out again meant another set-to with the English bulldogs of the sea.

During the course of the war, Germany, as with other losses, carefully concealed the real damage she had suffered in this fight off the banks of Jutland. She claimed a loss of only eleven ships, whereas subsequent events have shown the number to be not less than eighteen. On the other hand, Great Britain frankly admitted her own loss of fifteen ships.

Thereafter the German fleet remained in seclusion. It was the first and last great naval battle of the World War.

THE END